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# **HISTORICAL and BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCHES**

**PUBLICATION NO. 6**

**OF**

**HISTORICAL SOCIETY OF SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA**

**March, 1972**

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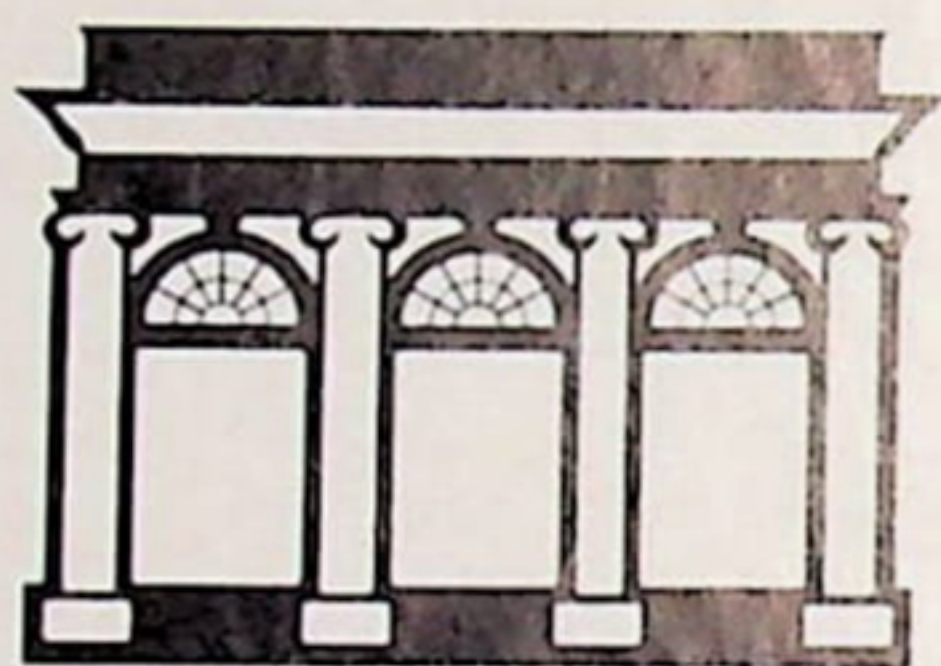
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Published by the Southwest Virginia Historical Society

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## **TIVIS COLLEY SUTHERLAND: PIONEER DOCTOR OF THE FRYING PAN**

*by Bonnie Ball*

It was perhaps the inspiration of his ancestors which endowed Tivis Colley Sutherland with the desire and the ability to love, serve, and get along with people. He first saw the light of day on February 12, 1880, on Frying Pan Creek, in what was then Buchanan County, Virginia. A few months after his birth, this section of land was incorporated into the newly-formed Dickenson County, which led Tivis' grandfather to remark that he had lived in three different counties, Russell, Buchanan, and Dickenson, without ever moving. Tivis' parents were Joshua Price and Isabelle Counts Sutherland, and his paternal grandparents were William and Sylvia Counts Sutherland. One paternal ancestor, James Sutherland, had immigrated to Virginia in the late Eighteenth Century, settling in Bedford County. Tivis had eight brothers and sisters, only three of whom lived to maturity: Lydia, who married John Wright in 1900; May, who married Garland B. Owens in 1909; and Joshua Hoge Tyler, who was to become one of his state's leading educators and who married Emma B. Chase.

Tivis grew up in the Frying Pan area as a normal, active boy with a yen for adventure and fun. His younger brother, J.H.T., and his cousin, Elihu Jaspar Sutherland, were especially fond of relating stories about Tiv's boyhood. One of their favorite tales had to do with a three-year old Tiv and a mythical bear. One day, his grandmother, who lived about a mile away, came to visit. Tiv's mother seemed concerned about his habit of running off from the house, and rambling around in the neighboring woods. His grandmother, hoping to discourage his wanderlust,



said to him, "Tiv, you shouldn't do that. There're lots of varmints in the woods that could catch and eat you. As I crossed the walk-log today, I saw a big, black bear in the laurels, and it looked mighty hungry."

As the two women talked and went about the household chores, they suddenly missed Tivis. They called and called but received no answer. They went in search of him, and finally located him near the end of the walk-log a quarter of a mile upstream. His frantic mother called to him, "Tiv, what on earth are you doing away up here in the woods?"

"I'm hunting for Granny's black bear, Maw," came the answer. Then, turning to his grandmother, he inquired eagerly, "Granny, which way did the bear go?"

Judge Elihu Jasper Sutherland has recorded another boyhood anecdote about his colorful cousin:

Occasionally Tivis would come up to my grandfather's home, where I also lived--at what is now called Fair View--to help us with the farm work. Grandpa Billy usually supervised our work. One day, when Tivis was about sixteen, he came up to work in the hayfield. Grandpa asked him if he could use a scythe, and Tivis assured him that he was an experienced mower. He was given a scythe and was told where to mow along the top of a little ridge. Then Grandpa went to other tasks for about thirty minutes.

When he returned to Tivis' job, he stopped and watched for a few minutes. At every sweep of the scythe, Tivis dug the end of the implement into the ground. Grandpa stood this unorthodox method of mowing as long as he could and then roared at Tivis:

"I thought you said you could mow! A baby could do better'n you're doin'! What makes y' stick th' scythe blade in the ground?"

Tiv kept on mowing, and, casually looking back over his shoulder, said in a mischievous tone: "I'm tryin' t' smooth your hayfield, Grandpa. It's awfully rough!"

Tivis had an unusually strong love for horses. He lived about a quarter mile below the Sulphur Springs Baptist Church on Frying Pan, and he liked to ride to the monthly meetings. He had a spirited, gaited horse which he liked to show off to



his admiring neighbors. During most of the summer, the horse was kept in a pasture on the "ridge field", about a half-mile from his home. On Sundays, Tiv would take the bridle and climb the steep path to the hill to catch his horse, sometimes after a merry chase, and then lead him down a narrow, crooked path to the barn where he saddled him.

He would then put on his Sunday clothes, climb into the saddle, and canter up the road to the church, just about at the time when the opening song would start. The crowd would line up to watch him put his horse through its gaits as he passed the church on his way to the hitching tree. At the end of services, he would mount his steed and prance back past the crowd. His cousin, E.J., once remarked, "He sure loved to ride his horse, and would walk a mile to ride a half."

As a boy, Tivis attended Sulphur Springs school on Frying Pan Creek. One fall, when he was home on a short vacation from medical school, he visited his old school, and, as was customary, he was asked to address the students. In a brief, friendly discourse, he expressed his pleasure at being back at his old school and at being with the youngsters. He then proceeded to give them some advice as to how to become better citizens, stressing their need to avoid the use of tobacco, alcohol, and profane language. At this point, he noticed that some boys were giggling on the back seats. Pointing his finger at them in pretended anger, he said: "Boys, I know why you are laughing. What I am saying to you is 'Do as I say--not as I do.'"

After completing his local schooling, Tivis attended a normal school in Fountain City, Tennessee. Upon completion of his work there, he taught school in Dickenson County and turned down an offer of a job as principal in Hominy, Oklahoma. It was during this time that he was involved in one of his last boyish episodes before he turned to more serious work. Timber operators were cutting great quantities of pop-



lar logs, which they floated down Frying Pan Creek, through the Breaks of the Cumberlands, and into Kentucky where they were sawed into lumber at mills on the Big Sandy and the Ohio. The floating was done when the streams were swollen with rains and snows in the springtime. Some of the more adventurous boys liked to jump onto the floating logs and see how long they could ride them. One March day, Tivis' cousin, Kilgore Sutherland, was visiting him. The spring tide was on, and long lines of poplar logs were whirling down the Frying Pan. In search of excitement, the boys dared one another to a contest in log-riding. They jumped on separate logs and rode them far downstream. As they turned a curve, they saw that other logs had become jammed at a narrow place in the creek ahead of them, piling up for a hundred yards or more upstream. As they approached the log jam, Kilgore jumped off his log, but Tivis decided to win the contest by riding into the jam. He was soon knocked off his log by the impact of colliding logs and was pulled under the log-jam in deep water. In a short time, however, his head popped up in the mass of logs fifty feet below the middle of the jam. In his excitement and great relief, Kilgore could think of only one thing to say: "Tiv where's y'r hat?"

In 1903, an uncle, Noah T. Counts, began study at the Medical College of Virginia as did a cousin, Jesse Columbus Sutherland. Their experiences inspired Tivis, who returned with them to medical school the following year. When Tivis completed medical school, he returned to Frying Pan where he purchased a horse for \$180 and opened an office. His first patient was his cousin, Lee Sutherland, of Tiny.

Tiv's father had died in 1906, and his son assumed the responsibility of supporting the family, which included sending his younger brother, Hoge, through high school and college. The young doctor remained in that small, isolated community for eleven years, gaining a reputation for his ability to treat





*Dr. and Mrs. Tivis Sutherland*

typhoid fever successfully and for his skill in handling difficult obstretic cases.

Mr. Ralph Rasnick, on the staff of the *Coalfield Progress*, summed up Dr. Sutherland's early practice:

Years later Doc recalled that there were no regular fees scheduled in those early years. Labor cases were \$5 and, after a number of years, went up to \$10. Office calls were 50¢ to \$1. He usually charged 25¢ a mile for travel on horseback or on foot. When he went to a home on a call, he charged very little other than mileage.



He rode on horseback for a dozen years before he bought a T-Model Ford, although he often remarked that it was of little use to him since there were no roads. He complained that there was no hospital within fifty miles and no way to get to it if there had been one.

He married Emma Burns Yates, a Dickenson County teacher, in 1911, and he gave her most of the credit for whatever success he had. Often his calls meant fording swollen streams in bitterly cold weather and he would return home with his feet frozen in the stirrups. His wife would be waiting with a hammer to break the ice and free him.

"It never made any difference about money," Dr. Sutherland said, in reminiscing about the rewards of practicing medicine. He would accept anything as payment including hams, potatoes, molasses, or, quite often, nothing at all. In fact, one man came to him and told him that he wanted to pay for his own delivery. His folks had never had any money, and the doctor had delivered eleven babies at their house. The man insisted upon paying the debt even though it was thirty years late..

A versatile man, Dr. Sutherland always carried a pair of pliers in his saddlebags in case someone needed a tooth extracted. "I guess I pulled a washtub full," he once estimated. The bulk of his practice, however, consisted of delivering babies. Although a fire destroyed all his office records in 1934, he estimated in 1948 that he had "caught over 6000 babies," and had averaged about 150 a year.

Although the doctor was generally welcome everywhere, as is indicated by the singular fact that he did not find it necessary to carry a gun, he was shown no special favor on at least one occasion. Speeding down the road to make a call, he chanced to run over an old hen. Not only did he suffer damage when one of the fractured bones pierced his tire, but the indignant owner--apparently a formidable old lady--insisted



that he pay her two dollars for the dead chicken, an exorbitant price in those days.

On one of the doctor's many labor cases, he arrived at the home of a couple who already had seven boys and were hoping that the eighth one would be a girl. When the tired, exhausted mother asked, after the ordeal was over, if the new baby was a girl, he was forced to tell her that their eighth boy had just been born. The mother wailed in disappointment, "Now Doc, y'know I didn't want nary other boy!"

"Wel-l-l," said Doc, "D'y' want me t' put it back?"

"Lord 've mercy, no!" she cried.

Dr. Sutherland was constantly active and, during the days of the party line telephone, the whole community kept up with his location at any given time. He worked alone in his office at first, but later hired nurses to assist him. These included Mrs. Marie Lester, Mrs. Dolly Rose, and Mrs. Clara Coleman. After the family moved to Haysi, many of the children of friends and relatives lived with the Sutherlands in order to take advantage of the high school. The most that was required of them was to help Mrs. Sutherland with the milking, feeding of stock, gardening, and household chores. For many years after they moved to town, Mrs. Sutherland kept her cows and chickens, and, until the year of her death, there was always a large vegetable garden with truck patches.

The Sutherlands had six children of their own. The eldest, Ayers, was unmarried and remained his mother's constant companion from the time his father died in 1960 until his own sudden death five years later. The second son, Joshua Price, received his medical degree from his father's *alma mater* just in time to be called into the service of his country in World War II. He was a captain and a surgeon in the 106th Infantry Division in 1943. When von Runstedt broke through the allied lines into Belgium in December, 1944, he was taken to a German prison, where he was praised for his heroic service to both comrades and foes alike. He was liberated some weeks



later. After the war he returned home to become the head physician for the Harman Coal Company near Grundy and now owns and operates the Sutherland Clinic in that town.

The third son, Tivis Colley Sutherland, Jr., also served overseas in World War II. He attended Emory and Henry College and now assists his brother at the Sutherland Clinic. The older daughter, Mrs. Ruth Watkins, has served as a teacher and as a public welfare supervisor in Lee and Buchanan Counties. She is active in club and church work and is a member of the Buchanan First Presbyterian Church, the Order of the Eastern Star, the Historical Society of Southwest Virginia, and the Lovelady Chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution.

The younger daughter, Blanche, is now Mrs. Almer Arrington of Abingdon. Before her marriage, she was an accomplished bookkeeper and accountant.

Together with Dr. A.S. Richardson of Grundy, Dr. Sutherland helped form the Buchanan-Dickenson County Medical Association in 1932, and served as president and secretary of the organization. In 1935, he fought a tireless battle which culminated in the establishment of the first public health department in Dickenson County. He also fought to have the town of Haysi incorporated and afterward served many terms as councilman. He also served some years on the School Electoral Board of Dickenson County. Other successful undertakings in which he had a part were the moves to establish the Breaks Interstate Park and to build the road down the McClure River. He was a large stockholder in the Old Cumberland Bank and Trust Company, and president of the Dickenson County Diamond Jubilee Association in 1955. He was a member of the Sandy Valley Masonic Lodge of Grundy and of the Kazim Temple of Roanoke; a charter member and director of the Haysi Kiwanis Club organized in 1949; and a member of the Haysi Church of Christ.



At the meeting of the Virginia Medical Association in October, 1958, Dr. Sutherland was named the "General Practitioner of the Year" in recognition of his fifty years of faithful medical service. On November 23, 1958 Doctor Tiv. was honored by the people he had served in this rugged hill country for half a century. More than 800 people turned out to pay homage to the man who had doctored their ills, delivered their babies, and offered them love and counsel since 1908. Many of those included three generations of men and women he had ushered into the world.

Doctor Tiv., nearing his 79th birthday, was caught completely by surprise at the "This is your Life" program planned for him, just as he was when he received the state-wide honor by his fellow physicians. It was with tears in his eyes and his unusual smile that Dr. Sutherland greeted relatives and friends who came forward as living testimonies of their love and respect for him. Among the program participants was Mrs. Emma Barton of nearby Bee, Virginia, who interrupted Doctor Tiv.'s wedding night back in 1911 when she chose that night to be born. Another participant was Mrs. Betty Pauly of Detroit, who brought along her month-old daughter, both delivered by Dr. Sutherland.

All his children and grandchildren were announced, and they greeted him and Mrs. Sutherland on the stage of the Haysi High School Building. Then came old friends and relatives who had boarded in their home to teach or attend high school; and a pioneer minister, the Reverend T.K. Mowbray, who shared the comfort and hospitality of the Sutherland home while he was establishing the Dickenson First Presbyterian Church. After Mr. Mowbray, who had come from South Carolina, there appeared another surprise visitor for the occasion—the Reverend Neil McKinnon, a Methodist minister of Clintwood, who had also stayed at the Sutherland home on occasions, and who hilariously described the way in which he



came over to Haysi and baptized Mr. Mowbray's new Presbyterian converts by immersion. Since he was a Methodist, the members largely former Baptists who wished to join the Presbyterian Church, the Rev. McKinnon said that he still had not figured out exactly what those he baptized were.

County officials, school authorities, members of the Legislature, state senators, and Ninth District Congressman, Mr. W. Pat Jennings, all came to pay tribute. The ladies of the community served lunch to the hundreds of people who attended the ceremony that was presented by Mr. Glen Kiser.

Messages and awards flooded in from all over the nation: the certificate of recognition presented by the Medical Society of Virginia to Doctor Sutherland; a certificate of appreciation and recognition, signed by the President of the United States, Dwight D. Eisenhower, and the Governor of Virginia, J. Lindsey Almond, Jr.; a letter of congratulation from Congressman W. Pat Jennings; also congratulations from the district governor of the Kiwanis International; an article in the *Commonwealth*, "Virginians in the Public Eye"; also letters from Mr. and Mrs. A. West of Fincastle, Virginia; Allen D. Crutchfield of Richmond, Virginia, Tivis D. Owens, Attorney, of Richlands, Virginia; Dr. G.D. Vermilya, of Clinch Valley Clinic Hospital; Dr. Frank S. Givens of Roanoke; and a most interesting personal letter from Dr. Sutherland's younger brother, Mr. J.H.T. Sutherland, which was written to his nephew, Dr. Joshua P. Sutherland, of Grundy. In the course of this program the late Dr. Williams of Richlands appeared on the stage and told how he and Dr. Sutherland once performed a leg amputation on a dining table.

Dr. Sutherland was one who seldom complained or spoke of his own troubles. However, in 1959 it became evident that his health was failing. During 1960 he agreed to go to Charlottesville for extensive tests, and eventual surgery.



Later he returned to his home in Haysi, and it soon became evident that the courageous old soldier was fighting a losing battle. He passed away on October 21, 1960 at his home, with his beloved Emma and his children by his bedside.

His funeral service on October 23, 1960, was conducted at the Haysi Church of Christ, and was attended by more than a thousand people, many of whom were unable to enter the church except to file past his casket with tearful eyes. So vast was the procession that cars were parked from lower Main Street most of the way to the northern Haysi corporate limits. The great array of floral tributes filled the church altar and overflowed to the windows and walls.

Honorary pall bearers were from his own medical profession and business associates.

He was buried on the hill overlooking the town of Haysi that he loved so well.

Besides his widow and five children, he was survived by his sister, Mrs. May Owens, of Tiny, Dickenson County, Virginia; his brother, J.H.T. Sutherland, (who passed away in February, 1970); eleven grandchildren; and a host of relatives and friends.

I cannot think of a more fitting way in which to close the life story of this great Southwest Virginian than to quote from my own feature article in the *Bristol Herald Courier* in 1948, the fortieth year of his medical practice:

"Dr. Sutherland has lived perhaps a more interesting life than many other individuals combined, but he was too busy to capitalize on it. He endured long hours of weariness and loss of sleep. He faced danger in the forms of disease, flood, ice, snow, sub-zero weather, and traffic risks, but none seemed to alarm or ruffle him. His calmness, cheerfulness and generosity were his stepping stones to fast friendships and success."

Much has been said of the feats of gunmen of the Cumberland ranges who destroyed life, but far too little is told of those brave souls who escorted and saved the lives of a veritable forest of grateful people.



## THE 1916 CONGRESSIONAL CAMPAIGN IN THE NINTH DISTRICT

*By Stanley Willis*

Even a casual glance at newspapers available to Ninth District residents in the early months of 1916 would have revealed much of interest and grave importance. The armies of France and Germany were locked in deadly embrace at Verdun, a blood bath that would produce over 700,000 casualties. Interest in the 1916 presidential election was already beginning to build. Woodrow Wilson, in these months, advocated a program of national preparedness, fought the Gore-McLemore resolutions, congressional measures to reduce the president's power to conduct foreign affairs, and pushed the nation to the brink of war with an ultimatum to Germany following the sinking of the *Sussex* in late March. From Richmond, a freshman state senator from Wytheville, Elbert Lee Trinkle, received wide press coverage for his strong advocacy of prohibition and woman suffrage in the Virginia General Assembly.

Democratic politicians in the District were concerned about the events in Europe and Washington, but they were more immediately interested in Trinkle's impact. Since 1907, the incumbent Ninth District Congressman had been a Republican, Campbell Bascom Slemph of Big Stone Gap, and one of the fondest dreams of the Democracy was to redeem the Ninth and return the state solidly to Democratic control. Trinkle seemed a likely possibility to dethrone Slemph and, even before the session ended, Western papers were predicting bigger things for the Wytheville legislator. Two months later, political breezes from the mountain counties hinted that Trinkle sentiment for the 1916 Congressional campaign was building.



By the first of August, with the District Democratic Convention only two weeks away, several possibilities for the candidacy were being mentioned, but nobody seemed anxious for the honor. A week before the convention, headlines screamed, "WILL NOT RUN IN NINTH, SAYS TRINKLE." The *Roanoke Times* had asked him point blank what his intentions were and Trinkle, not very originally or convincingly, spelled out why he would not seek the nomination. Trinkle cited that he had two years yet to serve as state Senator. He had been chosen elector-at-large at the state convention and wanted time to devote to that; he had no law partner, and above all he felt there were men better qualified.<sup>1</sup> He left unsaid other and more pressing considerations. To contest Slemp in his lair, particularly with a late start, required large expenditures of time and money with little chance of defeating the incumbent. Offsetting these adverse considerations was the opportunity to have the honor, to make the good race, and to get the publicity so necessary to future political aspirations.

The matter still was not settled when the district convention met in Bristol on August 12. A roll call of the counties failed to produce a candidate. A committee composed of one man from each of the thirteen counties and headed by Governor Stuart retired to recommend someone. When they reconvened, Stuart addressed the assembly, lauded the qualities and selflessness of their choice, and concluded with Trinkle's name. Amid a long, vocal and enthusiastic demonstration, Trinkle, "red, perspiring and trembling with emotion," made his way to the platform. Always ready for a speech and undoubtedly having one prepared, Trinkle was piously and properly humble and singularly optimistic. "If ever a man on bended knee prayed to be delivered from politics, I am that man....But if it please God that out of all these men that I have been chosen to lead you, I accept." He went on to set the directions of the campaign in a eulogy to President Wilson's program and the solemn announce-



ment that with Wilson, next only to Jefferson in principle and purpose, this was a Democratic year.<sup>2</sup>

Trinkle's campaign plan was simple. Legally, since poll taxes had to be paid six months prior to the general election, it was too late to qualify more voters. The Republicans, of course had paid up their people for the ever-possible challenge. This was not to be a vote-buying contest. Stuart in 1910 had proved the futility of that approach. Trinkle's only chance was to work hard, to build upon a few simple issues, and to try to force Bascom Slemp into some critical mistake.

The Democratic campaign opened at Pulaski on September 4, and, amid his cousins and friends, Trinkle made a speech in which pathos, flag-waving, scorn and biting ridicule held equal sway--a speech with variations he would make all over the district. He recalled with glee that in 1912, Slemp, Pulaski editor Tom Muncy, and imported Republican orators had toured the district arguing that if the tariff laws were changed, the Ninth's economy would collapse and babies would die for lack of nourishment. Yet, all mines were running at full production, all men were working, agricultural prices were up and babies were growing fat "upon the milk and honey of Democratic prosperity."

He lauded in detail Wilson's domestic program, and then turning to foreign policy and the preparedness issue, Trinkle praised peace, America, Wilson, and God, and the four became one:

America, dear old America, has had the flag made up of the stars and stripes, the emblem of our nationality, floating and waving triumphantly during that very same period, and under a Democratic administration, and under the leadership of that great and fearless American Woodrow Wilson, over a people to whom there has been given more happiness, more prosperity, and more of peace than has ever been vouchsafed to any other nation of the world. God, in his merciful providence, seems to have selected as the chief instrumentality for the accomp-



lishment of this good to our nation, Woodrow Wilson, the president of the United States of America. Nothing short of Divine guidance, Divine support, Divine intelligence, and Divine physical constitutional make-up could have given to us such leadership as we have had. At the setting of the sun of each passing day we knew not what would happen with the coming rays over the eastern hills in glory the morning next. We have patiently and quietly and confidently felt that at the helm was brain-power of unlimited foresight, muscle of untiring strength and hands of never-ceasing activity and have laid ourselves down at nightfall to pleasant sleep, in this period of turmoil, disquietude, and fraternal strife, believing that all would be well under his guidance. How wisely our belief was placed and how satisfying has been our reward! Can America ever pay to Woodrow Wilson the debt that it owes? Can any American citizen, who has in his make-up one spark of gratitude, ever cast his vote to take away such a man from the leadership of the nation?

Attacking the Republicans, he compared Charles Evans Hughes, the Republican presidential candidate, and Slemp to the wonder that was Wilson. Hughes "has dwindled from a high position as a capable jurist to less than a cross roads politician". As in subsequent speeches, Trinkle charged that Hughes had uttered no word that history would record; he had offered no constructive leadership. To compare him with Wilson was to liken the ridiculous with the sublime. To compare the Democracy with Republicanism was to match the party of peace, happiness and prosperity with that of the corporate interests, the trusts and the money kings.

Bascom Slemp, Trinkle added, had done nothing for the Ninth or for his country. He had sent out complimentary packets of garden seeds at government expense; he had never consumed more than a half hour of Congress' time with anything he had



ever said; he had favored public buildings for the Ninth, but so had the rest of the state's delegation; he promised more offices than either Congress or the President had the power to give; and he had consistently voted against the interests of the people. By implication, Trinkle would back the President fully, and under Democratic guidance, the Ninth would continue to be prosperous, and the nation would remain at peace.<sup>3</sup>

Immediately upon Slemph's nomination *in absentia* on August 29, Trinkle sent him an open challenge to debate throughout the district. Slemph sidestepped it, and thus provided Trinkle with an additional barb. "When I have been to Congress as long as C. Bascom Slemph and some mountain boy invites me to meet him in joint debate I'll meet him if he skins me alive."<sup>4</sup>

In the first major effort to dethrone Slemph since 1910, Democratic state leaders found their way into the district to help the "boy orator," offering speeches, money, and their own considerable experience at organizing. Davis, Ellyson, Pollard, all eager for exposure for the coming gubernatorial campaign, were there along with Martin, Flood, Swanson, Glass, Tucker, and Montague, bringing flowing, empty oratory and practical, shirt-sleeve politics, all for the people who loved it best.<sup>5</sup> Enthusiasm was high, and the miners, tobacco farmers, and moonshiners came out of the hills and valleys to mingle, to listen, to revel in it, and, ultimately, to vote for Bascom Slemph.<sup>6</sup>

Most of the thunder in the mountainous Ninth was stirred up by the Democrats. The Republicans seemed uninterested and in fact carried on a very lackluster campaign. Slemph knew that Trinkle was no real threat. The Republicans had been duly registered and "paid up" as usual that spring. There was probably a three or four thousand Republican majority on the capitation rolls, and the county chairmen and the precinct captains could be counted on to get out the vote. Slemph's interest that entire year had been on national politics and most of his work was at that level.



Bascom Slemp was rapidly becoming the South's most powerful Republican. His interest was less and less in trying to build a strong party in the state and more and more in being the chief Republican patronage dispenser in the state and in the South. This insured his control of the Virginia delegation to the national conventions and the control of many delegates throughout the South. Thus by simply holding on to his Ninth District fiefdom, he had a safe power base from which to exercise tremendous personal political influence. Aside from the pure enjoyment of having and exercising political power, his probable aim was a cabinet post, an honor he sought and was denied three times.

Lewis P. Summers of Abingdon was Slemp's chief lieutenant. In 1915 and 1916, through Slemp, Summers served as political errand boy for the conservative Republican National Congressional Committee, and as a paid organizer for an aspiring presidential candidate. The National Republican party in 1916 was optimistic that it could seal the break of 1912 and regain the presidency. Candidates were numerous. There was a groundswell for Taft; Roosevelt was engineering a groundswell for himself; there was great support for Hughes. Surreptitiously, many conservative business men and standpat politicians were backing another eager hopeful, Senator John W. Weeks of Massachusetts.<sup>7</sup>

Certainly by December 1915 and probably before, men like Summers were traveling over the country with a dual purpose—to raise money to organize and finance the campaigns of businessman congressional candidates and to seek convention support for Weeks. The appeal to business men for money was an interesting one. It was an outright plea to actively organize business interests to influence legislation in their favor by turning out the "demagogues, busters, and smashers" and electing a legislature of business men.<sup>8</sup>



Although Weeks' candidacy died at the convention, Slep was honored in August by being chosen to head the Speaker's Bureau for the national campaign. This would keep him out of the district until well into September, while Trinkle's campaign seemingly gained momentum.<sup>9</sup>

Slep was in no danger. Summers' papers are full of ungrammatical but indicative letters like the following:

Mr. Summar if you can arrang to have my pole tax pay I have work here at homme will distaine me frome coming to Abingdon on Saturday and if you shall attend to this little matter for me, I will consider it a great accomadation to me.<sup>10</sup>

After the deadline for tax payment, Slep told Summers that the district appeared to be in better shape than any time since 1904, and he judged their majority at 3000. Since this had been Slep's life-blood since 1902, there is no reason to doubt the accuracy of his estimate. Characteristically, Slep was careful to note the passage of the absentee vote law in the 1916 Assembly and instructed Summers to give careful attention to it. He was particularly interested in the possibility of getting troops on the Mexican border to vote.<sup>11</sup>

Slep finally opened his campaign at Abingdon on September 25. In a dull, measured and fact-filled address, he stated his position. He apologized for being absent at the convention in August, explained his work for the national ticket, and then recited a long list of "progressive" acts for which he had voted and on which Trinkle had "misrepresented" his position. He pointed out other measures which Trinkle had praised and for which he had voted, including the good roads bill and the income tax amendment. He claimed responsibility for establishing the Good Roads Committee, quoted letters to prove it, and said that he had become a member of the Appropriations Com-



mittee in order to insure that the Ninth received its fair share of the monies. But all this was only part of the ritual. Slemph, who spoke seldom and not well did so not to win votes, but because it was expected. Trinkle, who spoke well and often, spoke because he loved it, because he looked to a future day, and because it was his only chance of victory. A better indication of the way the campaign was progressing is the fact that Slemph and Summers apparently exchanged no significant letters concerning the campaign after Slemph took the field.

Election day found Slemph with his usual majority; he even carried Wythe County by two votes. Trinkle explained to Andrew Jackson Montague that it was "simply a case of too many poll taxes unpaid by Democrats, and too large a campaign fund in hands of the opposition." His public statement was similar, emphasizing his belief that even in defeat the campaign had served to cement the party for the future. Trinkle's evaluation was not quite accurate. As long as Bascom Slemph chose to run he was unbeatable. For Trinkle, however, the campaign served a valuable purpose. He had worked closely with the state Democratic power structure with ample opportunity to display his talents. When these state leaders needed a gubernatorial candidate in 1921 with energy, considerable talent and a definite oratorical flair, Trinkle was readily available. The time and money invested in the campaign against Slemph paid valuable dividends.

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<sup>1</sup>Roanoke TIMES, March 4, 18, August 6, 1916; conversation with Stuart B. Campbell, Wytheville, August 24, 1966.

<sup>2</sup>Roanoke TIMES, August 13; Bristol HERALD COURIER, August 12; Big Stone Gap POST, August 16, 1916.

<sup>3</sup>SOUTHWEST VIRGINIA ENTERPRISE, September 8; Roanoke TIMES, September 5; Bristol HERALD COURIER, September 5, 1916; lest one be too inclined to scoff at the rhetoric, Stuart Campbell said that he read what must have been this speech before Trinkle ever delivered it and thought it empty. Yet, he heard Trinkle give it three times and cried WITH him every time.

<sup>4</sup>Roanoke TIMES, September 13, 1916.



<sup>5</sup>See W. J. Cash, *THE MIND OF THE SOUTH*. (New York, 1941), 52-54 for a discussion of oratory as an integral part of the Southern mind.

<sup>6</sup>Patrick Henry Drewry Papers, University of Virginia, Drewry to Trinkle, September 7, 1916; the Roanoke *TIMES* and the Bristol *HERALD COURIER* give the campaign good coverage. See, in particular, October 1, 5, 26 and 28 in the *TIMES*.

<sup>7</sup>George Mowry, *THEODORE ROOSEVELT AND THE PROGRESSIVE MOVEMENT*. (New York, 1942), 337 ff; see letters from O. E. Wellers, Weeks' staff man, to Summers, December-June, 1915-1916, W. P. Summers Papers, University of Virginia.

<sup>8</sup>Summers to W. Cooper Procter, Cincinnati, February 25, 1916, *IBID*.

<sup>9</sup>See letters to Summers from National Congressional Committee, June-August, 1916; Slomp to Summers, August 25, September 1, 1916, *IBID*.; Histories of the 1916 Republican campaign ignore Weeks although he was second to Hughes on the first ballot; see Mowry, *THEODORE ROOSEVELT*, 345-359; William S. Myers, *THE REPUBLICAN PARTY*. (New York, 1928), 416-425; George Mayer, *THE REPUBLICAN PARTY 1854-1964*. (New York, 1965), 339-342; William Harbaugh, *THE LIFE AND TIMES OF THEODORE ROOSEVELT*. (New York, 1963), 457-460.

<sup>10</sup>John Brisen to Summers, May 5, 1916, Summers Papers.

<sup>11</sup>Slomp to Summers, September 5, 1916, Summers Papers; Horn, "Democratic Party", 199; *ACTS OF ASSEMBLY*, "Chapter 369," 633.



## REMINISCENCES OF J.J. KELLY, JR.\*

I was born at Kellyview, Wise, County, Virginia, on March 16 1890. My father and grandfather were native residents of Wise County. My grandfather's old home was what is now Appalachia. My father established a home and built a six room log-house about three miles from Appalachia. When the Louisville and Nashville railway was built through my father's place, a post office was established and named Kellyview. I am the eleventh of a family of twelve, all of whom were born in the log-house at Kellyview. For three years I attended the Kellyview one-room school. The term was for three or four months. This school is the only one-room school building which has been in continuous operation since the year 1892. My teachers were the daughters of the then-Superintendent of Schools, the Reverend William H. Wampler. During my stay in this school, I was taught from a chart by the ABC method of teaching. The chart was also used in the Family Word method such as rat, cat, bat, hat... .

In 1897 my father sold the farm and coal lands to the Virginia Coal and Iron Company. He moved from Kellyview to Tacoma where I again attended school. The school was held in a store building where I was taught by W.D. McNiel. We spent the winter of 1898 in Corbin, Kentucky, moving from there to Wise where I was assigned to the fourth grade at the beginning of the fall term of 1899 at the old Gladeville College. I continued in the same school throughout the grades and into the College Department. Gladeville College continued to be my school until 1906. There was an educational renaissance in 1905 and I was still in school when our old Gladeville College became Wise High School in 1906. I continued in Wise High School and finished a three-year course of study in 1907. I was one of a



class of seven who were the first graduates of Wise High School.

It was during these early years that I met and attended school with my wife who was then known as Trula Mae Watkins. Her family moved from Wise to Lynchburg and it was not until I was in school at Washington and Lee that I again met this attractive young lady. This romance culminated in marriage in 1912 when I began my first job as a teacher at \$90 a month.<sup>1</sup> I succeeded a man who resigned as principal of the Oak Hill High School, Oak Hill, West Virginia. I remained in the same position during the term of 1912-1913. In the fall of 1913, I returned to Virginia and became principal of the Kenbridge High School, Kenbridge, Virginia, at \$125 per month where I remained until I became Superintendent of Wise County Schools on the first day of January, 1917. I was then twenty-six years of age, with five and a half years of teaching experience . . . .

When I became superintendent of schools for Wise County, I had seven school boards, each board consisting of three members. School funds which came from the State were allocated to various school boards and each board determined its own policies and decided all matters pertaining to the salaries of teachers, length of school terms, etc. We had different salaries in the various districts of the county. The school terms were not the same, some having as little as five months for rural schools. The school terms for Big Stone Gap, Norton, Wise, and Roberson District was for nine months or 180 days. In the Gladeville and Lipps Districts, it was seven and one-half months and in the Richmond District it was eight and one-fourth. All colored schools operated for a period not greater than six months, except for Big Stone Gap which had a nine-month term. The total enrollment numbered 10,120 pupils, with an average daily attendance of 5,828.

The county paid out \$83,258.84 for the salaries of 194 teachers which gave an average annual salary of \$429.17. The total value of all school property was at that time \$310,000.



The only transportation of school pupils in 1937 was by wagon and horses. The roads were not good enough for transportation of pupils by automobile, so no school busses were in existence. Later, as roads were being provided, transportation was improved in the Richmond District. . . . No doubt, Wise County and the Richmond District have a unique distinction in transportation, as I am sure that these two political subdivisions are the only ones which in the past operated a special train for the transportation of pupils. This train ran from Appalachia to the nearby towns and collieries. The cost of this transportation was \$5400 for the school session of nine months. With this large amount of transportation no effort was made to consolidate schools. Several small schools even offered high school work.

In these early years, we had 87 school buildings, two of log, 79 frame buildings, and six of brick and stone.

Salaries of all school personnel in the early days were very low. The trustees, except for the clerk, got \$10 per year. The clerk of the District Board got \$3 for each teacher in his district. The Division Superintendent got \$2,160 per year. The highest salary paid to any high school principal was \$1,350 per year. The men teaching in high school received the minimum of \$630 per session and a maximum of \$900. . . . There seemed to be no fixed policy as to the equalization of salaries. The men received more than the ladies. The white received more than the colored, high school teachers received more than the elementary. . . .

During my long term of service. . . I have witnessed a wonderful advancement in public education. . . . It has always been my policy to let people know what they need, but at no time try to force the issuance of bonds. If the people are with you and they want better school accommodations, they will get them. Educational advancement is very much like the ocean with its undulating movements. The first came in 1905 with the birth of the high schools. . . . In 1923 we witnessed the passing of the



old district schools with the incoming of the countywide unit school system, with one school board instead of seven. . . .

Then another tidal wave of educational effort came at the close of World War II when our schools again became overrun with pupils. The result of this condition caused our people to take stock of their properties and by bond issues and taxation they have planned the greatest of all improvements in Wise County. When the program is completed, we will have more than ten million dollars of school property. . . .

From the conditions existing in 1917 we have gradually improved the salaries of all school personnel. All improvements had to be made on a local level as the state did not promulgate a salary scale for teachers until 1952. From the 197 teachers in 1917, we have during my tenure of office increased the number to 441. Our enrollment has shown a growth during that period but the real growth has been in keeping the pupils in school. Our average daily attendance in 1917 was 5,828 and in 1948-49 it was 11,374. New courses have been offered in the field of vocational education. . . .All the required courses are completed in the respective high schools with the electives available not only in the high school but in vocational courses at the Vocational and Technical School.

Just let me say, please, that the Vocational and Technical School operated under the Trade and Industrial Department of the State Board of Education represents one of the finest in the state of Virginia. . . .This school had its beginnings in the training of NYA pupils, then war training workers. . . .Additions are being constructed by trainees so that the permanency of the school is assured. In the establishment of this school the county has not spent much money. Surplus property has been secured from the government and added to our equipment. The State Board of Education has been helpful with appropriations. . . .





*Dr. J.J. Kelly, Jr.*  
*photo by L.F. Addington*



Our transportation system is one of the most extensive. . . . The forty-five busses operating in the county will carry more than six thousand children to and from school. . . .The operating of the busses costs approximately \$90,000 per year. . . .

[Wise County was the first to establish summer high schools and the first to employ high school principals on a twelve-month basis. It was also the first to introduce home economics and business education in all its high schools and the first to operate a five-year high school. It was the first to equalize salaries and school terms and the first to establish and maintain a county-wide vocational school]?

My philosophy of education is to teach pupils the fundamental subjects and how to think. The schools should be dedicated to the improvement of the mind and life of the pupils. . . .I have no place for the so-called progressive education school systems where the pupils run the schools and sometimes the teacher also runs. We want discipline in our schools and unless you get discipline you cannot hope to be successful in your teaching....

I have been associated with people of both political parties. . . .I am a Democrat but I have never asked a teacher about political or religious affiliation. I do not know the politics of many of my teachers. I think a great amount of my happy public relations has been due to the fact that politics has no place in public education. The nearest I ever came to leaving public education was when some people wanted to dictate political favors. I told them if that was what they wanted they could get someone else to do the job. I would not be a party to it. . . .

I believe in certain extra-curricular activities but it is my feeling that the schools are omitting some of our finest fields as we are acceding to public wish and demand for athletic programs. We are neglecting public speaking, dramatics, debating, and many other worthwhile things. The demand by the public for winning athletic teams has left a very unfavorable condition in our schools. I certainly hope that the coming years will



show an improvement in this regard. . . .

Among those who have served in Wise County, many have gone on to more responsible positions in the state. Dr. Sidney B. Hall, who was a teacher at East Stone Gap and Big Stone Gap, became Superintendent of Public Instruction in Virginia. Among those who have served, or are now serving, as superintendent, we find the following: J.J. Brubaker, Norfolk; Hugh K. Cassell, Augusta County; E.E. Givens, Martinsville; C.J.M. Kyle, Orange County; L.F. Shelbourne, Staunton; Hugh L. Sulfridge, Charlottesville; Roy E. Kyle, Bedford County; J.H.T. Sutherland, Dickenson County; Alonzo Monday, Grayson County; and L.W. Hillman, Galax. . . .

If I could be given the opportunity to live over my days and years as superintendent, I do not know of many things I could do differently. Of course, I would try to avoid many of the mistakes I have made. . . . I have had a lot of fun along the way /with/ . . . many amusing experiences. I might recall here two or three of them, directly related to the schools.

One experience occurred a day or two before I became superintendent. I was traveling on the chair car of the Clinch Valley Division of the N&W railroad when a conversation began on the other side of the aisle among three Wise County teachers discussing the new superintendent. . . . I remained incognito until I faced them in the classroom. They had forgotten what was said, so I made up a good wild story as to what happened. The second story I bring to mind had to do with a man teaching in a small one-room school. I visited the school unscheduled as I nearly always did and when I got in the classroom he seemed to be sound asleep at his desk. I sat down in the rear of the room and the titter from the young occupants of the school room got him awake. After he rubbed his eyes to get a little better vision he saw me sitting in the rear of the room. He did not address me but called to George, the largest boy in the room, and very vigorously applied the wooden medicine. After



he had finished, he said, "Now I want you to behave. I pretended to be asleep just to find out who was responsible for misbehavior." He then came back and greeted me.

The next and last story you may have heard. It has been told over the state of Virginia, but I will repeat the story for the benefit of those who have not heard it. The teacher told the story at a party so you can be the judge of the happenings. She came to this school, Stony Lonesome, one or two days late. I had not seen her and, as far as I know, she had not seen me until this visit. The story says that I came to her school early in the afternoon and stayed and stayed until she thought it might be time for me to leave. Since she was an exceptionally good-looking young girl, I had no reason to leave. Of course, not knowing I was superintendent and after many restless minutes, she finally said. "I am expecting my Superintendent this afternoon and I would dislike very much to have him come and find you here."

At this time, Virginia may be at the crossroads in education. The decisions which are to be made within the next few weeks will no doubt have a definite bearing on our future. If we choose the right road our public schools will be preserved. If, as some want to do, we relieve the state of its responsibility to operate the public schools, we may be in chaos. My prediction is that the people of Virginia will not abandon the public school system and that we will go forward to a bigger and brighter day in public education.<sup>3</sup>

\*Dr. Kelly served as Superintendent of Schools of Wise County from 1917 until his retirement in June of 1963. These observations on education are extracted from an interview (on March 24, 1959) with Dr. Kelly by W.D. Richmond, then Director of Instruction and later Kelly's successor. Because of space limitations, it was necessary to omit several delightful anecdotes as well as personal references to family and friends. The editor has taken the liberty of transposing several parts of the interview and making some minor changes in wording without the intrusion of the customary scholarly paraphernalia. The complete transcript of the interview has been mimeographed and may be seen in the archives of the Historical Society among other places. Dr. Kelly died on November 22, 1967.

<sup>1</sup>Dr. Kelly speaks of their two sons and two daughters in the interview.



Both daughters were teachers and graduates of Farmville State Teachers College, now Longwood College. The eldest son a medical doctor, was on the staff of Maguire Veterans Hospital. The younger son, William Watkins Kelly, was then on leave from his teaching duties at V.M.I. to serve in the Air Force. He has since been appointed president of Mary Baldwin College.

<sup>2</sup>This paragraph is paraphrased for reasons of organization, but it contains Dr. Kelly's essential points.

<sup>3</sup>This paragraph originally came before the anecdotes, but it seemed appropriate to conclude Dr. Kelly's thoughts on education with this testimonial. One has only to remember the atmosphere of 1959 to realize the significance of Dr. Kelly's words.

## **BRIEF GENEALOGY OF THE KELLY FAMILY**

by Emory L. Hamilton

Mrs. J.C. Mitchell of Appalachia, Va., has in her possession an old fire-damaged Bible belonging to some of the Kelly family which has names and dates recorded as below:

Patrick Kelly born June 2, 1707

John Jackson Kelly born June 2, 1707

Matthios Kelly born December 28, 1777

No doubt this is a direct Kelly line and it remains for some family genealogist to make the connections.

This manuscript begins with a Matthios Kelly, who was probably a son of a John Jackson Kelly, Sr. who had married Rebecca Jackson and lived in Tennessee.

Matthios Kelly married Abigail Sturgill, daughter of John and Jemima Wells Sturgill. After their marriage they lived for awhile in Kentucky, probably Harlan County where some three or four of their oldest children were born. Sometime in the 1830's they moved to the vicinity of Big Stone Gap which in his lifetime was known as the Three Forks of Powell River. All this section was then Lee County, becoming Wise County in 1856. Matthios is said to have operated one of the first stores in Lee County somewhere in the Big Stone Gap vicinity.



Sometime in the 1850's he moved his family to Milam, in Sullivan County, Missouri where he lived through the Civil War years and had moved back to Wise County by 1870. While living in Missouri his son Franklin Newton Kelly married on May 9, 1861 to Salomey Jane Neighbors, and they had a son, John William Kelly born May 19, 1862. Franklin Newton enlisted in the Missouri State Militia as a Bugler in Company C of the 1st Cavalry Regiment commanded by Captain James McFerrin, and was killed April 28, 1864, near Warrensburg in Johnson County, Missouri.

Two birth dates have been uncovered for Matthios Kelly and which one is correct remains to be proven. The first is December 28, 1797, and second December 28, 1800. He died December 15, 1872, and is said to have been buried about halfway between his old home site and Cadet alongside the L&N Railroad on a knoll and it has been said a large tree is growing out of his grave.

On January 3, 1818 he was married to Abigail Sturgill, born November 30, 1801. After the death of her husband, Abigail went to live with her oldest son, John Jackson Kelly at the Brick Store in upper Lee County in Turkey Cove. She died here and was laid to rest in the Jonathan Richmond Cemetery across highway 58 from her last home, now the Dave Isaac place. Abigail's picture, her loom, and some cloth she wore are now on display in the Southwest Virginia Museum at Big Stone Gap. Their children were:

John Jackson Kelly, born Oct. 6, 1821. Married Jane Booth.

Anna Kelly, born Feb. 15, 1824. Married Hiram Davidson.

Rachel Kelly, born Nov. 23, 1825. Married (1) a Gibbs  
(2) a Stoner.

Jemima Kelly, born Oct. 30, 1827. Married Elkanna Gilley.

Rebecca Kelly, born Oct. 23, 1829. Married a Marion.

Matthios Kelly, born April 7, 1832. Married Rebecca McKnight

William Henry Kelly, born Feb. 20, 1835. Married Mary Creech.



Patrick Jasper Kelly, born March 24, 1837. Married Mary Jane Sarah "Sally" Kelly, born April 5, 1839. Married a Spencer. Franklin Newton Kelly born May 25, 1842. Married Salomey Jane Neighbors.

Jane "Jennie" Kelly, born 1845. Married a Parker.

John Jackson Kelly, oldest son of Matthios and Abigail, lived on Callahan Creek, at or near the present Appalachia, Va. Kelly Branch of Callahan, still bears his name. He owned large acreages of land on Callahan, Looney and Roaring Fork Creeks of Powell River. He reared his large family here where he operated a grist mill, blacksmith shop and gun smith shop. He made "flint-lock rifles, bear traps and tools for the pioneer settlers."

After his children had all married and gone from home he sold his large land holdings to the coal companies and bought the old Gen. Jonathan Richmond home and Brick Store in Turkey Cove in the edge of Lee County just west of Big Stone Gap. Here he spent the remainder of his life, dying on June 30, 1909, and was laid to rest in the Richmond Cemetery. He married Jane, the daughter of Rev. William Booth, who was born Oct. 21, 1817 and preceded him in death on January 17, 1893.

Their children were:

Matthios Kelly, born Dec. 1, 1840, died Apr. 13, 1908.

Married Mary McKnight.

William Jasper Kelly, born Aug. 15, 1843. Married Katherine Day (2) Lura Clarkston.

Clerinda Kelly, born Nov. 24, 1844. Married John Lewis.

John Jackson Kelly, Jr. born Feb. 26, 1847. Married Ella Jane Lewis

David Kelly, born March 20, 1848. Married (1) Abigail Stidham (2) Roxanna Lewis

James J. Kelly, born Oct. 9, 1849. Married Sophia Robinette.



Isaac Newton Kelly, born Mar. 20, 1851. Married Mary Olinger.  
Abigail Kelly, born Feb. 17, 1853. Married Lafayette Wade.  
Dorinda Emeline Kelly, born Oct. 24, 1854. Married F.M.  
Clarkston.

Sarah Jane Kelly, born Nov. 4, 1856. Died young.  
Jemima Kelly, born Sept. 8, 1858. Married Sampson Bishop.  
Rebecca Marion Kelly, born Sept. 8, 1858. Married William  
Coldiron. (Jemima and Rebecca were twins.)

John Jackson Kelly, Jr. fourth child of John J. Kelly, Sr. and his wife Jane Booth, was born at the old Kelly home on Cal-lahon Creek February 26, 1847. He married Jane Lewis and settled at what is known today as Kelly View, on Route 23, between Norton and Appalachia. Here he built a six room, two story log house where his family of twelve children were born, Dr. John Jackson Kelly, Jr. being the eleventh born of these children, several of whom died young.

**Children:**

Emerson Kelly

Lawrence Willard Kelly married Genette Kilgore.

Dr. J.J. Kelly, Jr. married Trula Watkins.

Minter Dale Kelly, never married

Lora Jean Kelly never married.

Gustova Bronx Kelly never married.

Viola Kelly married Lawson White.

Orpha Kelly married Rossiter Rapp.



**ROBERT M. ADDINGTON**  
**EDUCATOR, SCOTT COUNTY COURT CLERK**

*by K. R. Addington, a son*

He was a father, a teacher, an historian, a Sunday School teacher, a Mason, a friend — thus you might give a thumbnail sketch of Robert Melford Addington, son of Joseph Milton Addington, one of the many Joe's in the Addington lineage. His mother was Kerrenah Estil Quillen, and where the unusual name of Kerrenah came from I do not know.

Robert Melford Addington was born April 14, 1867, on Copper Ridge in Scott County, Virginia, in a log house which, so far as I know, is still standing. The usual pursuits of farming, hunting, fishing, berrypicking, and exploring were carried on during his early boyhood. The only thing I recall most distinctly is a story about berrypicking. He, in company with an aunt, went to pick blackberries. The aunt, he thought, had gone away as she did not respond to calls. He started to look for her and finally found her going around in a circle, said circle decreasing in circumference each time around. Upon closer approach and observation he discovered a snake and he realized his aunt was being charmed by it. He hurriedly killed the snake and his aunt then was able to talk although it is doubtful she was able to resume berrypicking.

Robert M.'s first wife was Nannie Jackson Nickels, my mother. The children born to them were: Otta Fay, Justin, Gus, Kermit, and James.

As to exploring, I recall his account of going into a cave on Sinking Creek near Dungannon with a man by the name of Porter. They had a lantern but the light went out and they had nothing dry on which to strike a match and they positively



were down to their last match until one or the other remembered his trusty Barlow knife and fortunately this match did not go out. He described this cave as full of deep holes with water in it and did not believe he could ever have gotten out alive if the last match had gone out.

Skiping a presumably normal childhood, we come to his first experience as a teacher in 1884 at age 17 in a school sweetly named Sugar Grove. It was a crude and small building. Its exact location is unknown to me but within its walls individual instruction which is so much talked about today really took place. I have heard him say he left home before daylight and started teaching as soon as he arrived on a first come, first served basis; he left school barely in time to reach home before dark. I think the pay was about \$20 per month.

In addition to the one-room Sugar Grove school he taught similar schools at Saratoga, Purchase, Mace Springs and Jesse's Mill.

He taught in the State Summer School at Bristol, 1896, and at the State Normal School in Big Stone Gap for seven consecutive summers, 1907 to 1913. Then for four years he was associate principal with L. G. Stevenson at Shoemaker College in Gate City. He was a member of the first Shoemaker faculty as a history teacher.

After his tenure at Shoemaker he served one year as principal of Collingwood Academy in Russell County. Then he was principal of the school at Nickelsville. During 1903-1904 he assumed the presidency of Gladeville College in Wise, Wise County. After that he returned to Nickelsville where he served until 1911. This was followed by eight years as principal of Fulkerson High School. In all he taught for thirty-three years.

In preparation for teaching he graduated from Greenwood High School in 1887. Then he attended Peabody Normal School in



Nashville, Tennessee, where he was awarded an L. I. degree in 1890.

History was his teaching subject at the Normal schools. At Nickelsville and Maces Springs he was both principal and teacher and he operated what would be called a "tight" school. One of the rules he had at Maces Springs I can recall was that boys and girls were not to date each other over the weekend while school was in session. Relaxing of the rules was made for pie and ice cream suppers. I am not sure the aforementioned rule was strictly obeyed but if evidence was obtained of its violation the violators were punished. I think it also appropriate to mention that each day he opened school with a Bible reading, a short sermonette, and a prayer. In these sermonettes he preached against the evils of drinking whiskey. He told me he had tasted whiskey only once in his life.

I still come across former students of his who recall the teaching he did on moral issues aside from daily book lessons. Many times he told me that any influence for good he might have had was attributed more to these chapel exercises than to the conduct of classes.

He was usually called Professor Addington. His second wife, Loula L. Daugherty, always called him Professor instead of Robert or Bob. She perhaps had started this while she had known him at the Greenwood Normal School.

So far as I know, he was never physically assaulted by any student, although I am sure he was threatened by politics on some occasions. In fact, I know of one move he was forced to make because someone was influential enough with the School Board members to get it done. That move, by the way, in later years was to be an excellent one in helping him get elected County Court Clerk as it widened his circle of friends, particularly in Fulkerson District. From my own personal knowledge I do not know of a single student who attended



Fulkerson High School and later became involved in a serious criminal offense.

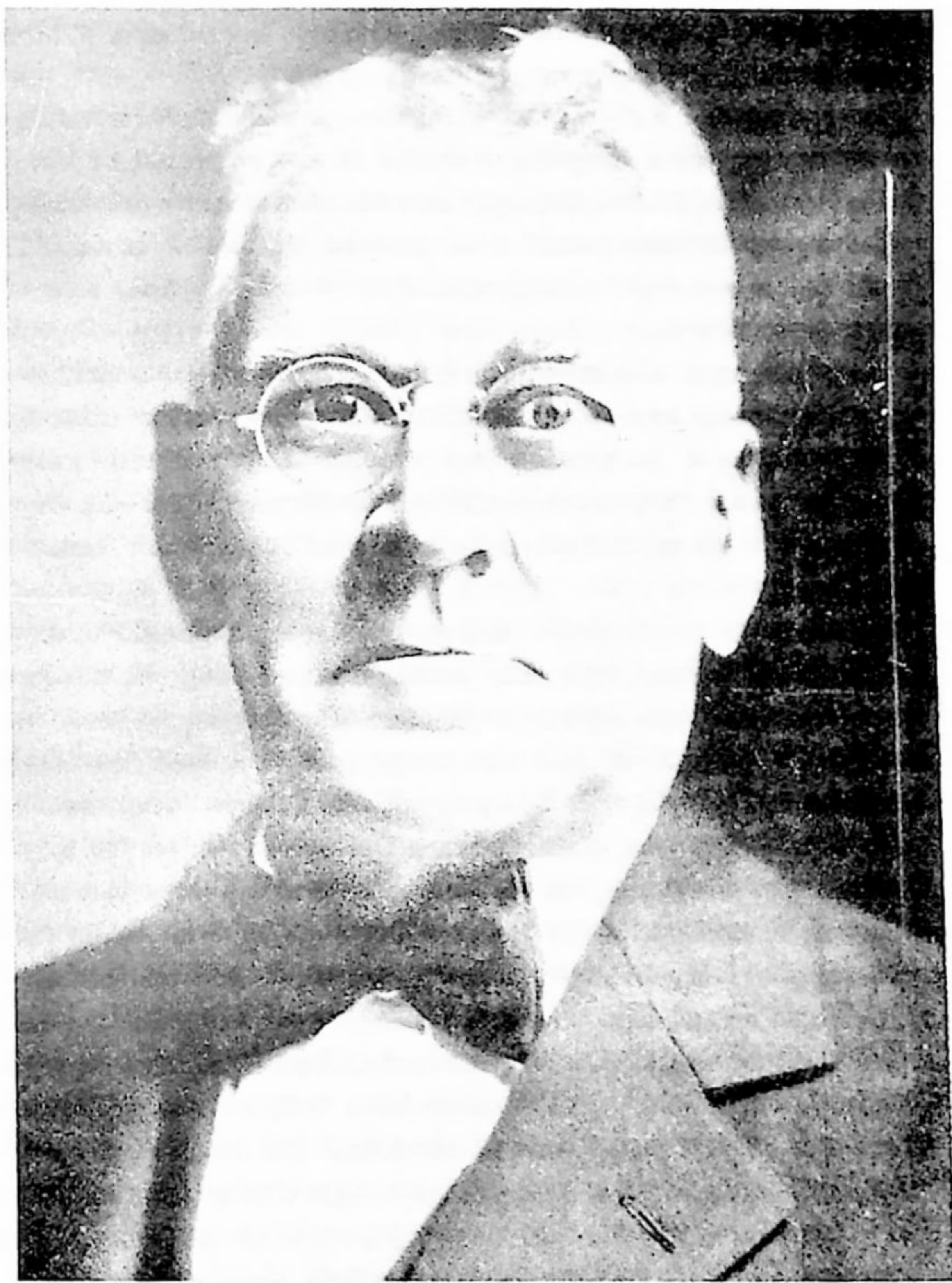
I might say, in regard to the teaching at Maces Springs, that without his knowledge of farming the years would have been much leaner. He bought a twenty-acre farm for about \$2,000 in Poor Valley and in the area where the land was really poor - more suited to sedge grass. By judicious use of manure and fertilizer, planting peas and alfalfa to add legumes, etc., he built up one level piece of ground which produced a large part of our living. On this same piece of ground two of his sons won prizes for best corn at the county fair. He even grew his own peanuts. The only thing I thought he got short changed on was swapping the labor of himself and three sons to neighbors having only one son and many more acres of land. Ours was purely a farm for self-preservation and no tobacco was grown as the land could not be spared for that.

He was a Mason. At what stage of his life or where he became a member I do not know. I do know, however, that he and Wright S. Cox, an attorney, were credited with knowing more about Masonry and instructing more applicants for admission than any other two men in the county..

As to his teaching Sunday School, I can only verify the fact that from 1920 or thereabouts he taught a class at the Baptist Church of Gate City until he, for personal reasons, went to the Methodist Church and there he continued to teach as long as he was able. Despite his deep religious faith and knowledge I cannot remember his ever urging any of his children to join a church and my more mature consideration of this leads me to believe that he thought membership would be more lasting if entered into voluntarily and perhaps he may have felt that a good example would most surely have its effect.

Robert M. Addington is listed as the author of *History of Scott County, Virginia*. In addition, he wrote the following: *A Syllabus of Scott County History, Old Time School in Scott*





R. M. ADDINGTON  
*The Author*



*County, Scott County in War Time, and Exact Location of Wilderness Road to Kentucky.*

To understand his interest in history presumably one would have to go back a long way and how it started would be anybody's guess. Suffice it to say that his eldest son was christened Justin Winsor, named after a noted historian. In fact, I believe his daughter's name, Otta Fay, was taken from something he had read.

On his meager earnings from teaching he started accumulating a library and it was accented with a majority of history books. I forgot to mention that my own name was originally Kermit Quentin, so named for Theodore Roosevelt's sons, but I didn't like the name Quentin so I changed it to Kermit Roosevelt.

W. D. Smith and John P. McConnell were two men who influenced my father to put into writing his knowledge of things historical. At the urging of Mr. Smith, he first produced a *Syllabus of Scott County* which was used in county schools. His *History of Old-Time Schools in Scott County* was issued as a publication from Radford State College of which Dr. McConnell was president. It was distributed throughout the nation by the college. With these beginnings he was urged to write the History of Scott County and with his limited resources so far as money was concerned over a period of fifteen years he assembled from available sources as much information as he could. When information was needed from the Wisconsin State Library, the place where the original Draper Manuscripts reposed, it took money to get the photostats as there was no micro-filming then. If he wanted information from the Virginia State Library or from some county records he had to pay for that, too. So far as I know the only financial help given was about \$100 from Dr. McConnell. Apologetically, he told me once that while he spent \$3,000 for 2,000 copies of Scott County histories at the Kingsport Press, other people



spent a like amount on golf, travel, etc.--because they liked such diversions. He was spending that much for something he liked: history.

I might mention that he often exchanged information with I. C. Coley who was most knowledgeable in the field of genealogy and I believe between them they could almost trace the roots and descendants of a majority of the families in Scott County. Albert Counts was another man who liked to talk history and genealogy with my father. In a more recent generation the late Charlie Baker used to stop by the house to talk history.

It was upon winning a scholarship by a competitive examination that he was able to go to the University of Nashville, which later became Peabody College. Here he became enamoured with his professors and the abundance of materials to be found in the library. I think one might safely assume it was here that he became acquainted with his first encyclopedia, his first set of histories. In his library later he himself had a set of Greene's *History of England* and a set of the *Encyclopedia Britannica*.

His work at the University of Nashville got for him an L. I. Degree, which, being translated, meant Licensed Instructor. A fellow student of his at the University of Nashville was Millard Horton, a fellow Scott Countian, who loved books so much that he practically flunked out since, according to my father, he would rather read than study. Evidently his work was satisfactory and had been accomplished by his own finance plus a scholarship as his father made no real money producing crops; tobacco was not sold then as now.

I have heard W. D. Smith say he bought his first dictionary by sale of rabbit skins at one cent each and no doubt saleable furs might have helped my dad.

My only memorable experience of him as an educator began with his principalship at Fulkerson High School in 1911. He



taught all high school subjects but high school there went through only the ninth grade. Latin, math, history, English pretty well described the curriculum. Evidently, to keep from spoiling me my dad would never help me with my homework and I pointed out that he would help others but not his own son. He bent over backwards so no one could accuse him of preferential treatment. I recall that after one of my brothers had been called an s.o.b. the brother proceeded at school to punch said name-caller on the nose.

I have often wondered what my father's feelings were when he switched my brother hard for this offense. Patience was a virtue of his which might by some unknowing person have been labeled inaction. He was truly slow to anger but at the same time steadfast in purpose without anger. This is just a way of saying he meant what he said and one had better believe it, although the saying was not coupled with any direct threat. I can truly say that I never in my life heard him rant and rave as some do when angry.

His try for nomination for County Court Clerk, for a second time, was suggested to him first by J. P. Corns, the attorney and father of Dr. Corns. His opponent for the nomination was a seasoned veteran in politics, Floyd Richmond, who had been in office 14 years.

Papa's main theme in the campaign was that the office should be available for some other good Republican. The competition for delegates at the convention in 1919 was great and Papa won by a few votes. This, I would imagine, was about the last campaign made on horseback by a candidate in Scott County. My grandfather had a mare, Old Mag, which he lent to my father for the duration of the campaign. He would leave Maces Springs on a Monday morning and not return until the end of the week. Sometimes he left his horse at places where he might be able to catch a train, come home for the weekend and resume campaigning from that location the following week.



His opponent in the general election was a veteran of World War I and it took a vigorous campaign to win as the sympathy for a veteran was most prevalent in 1919. This was where his long record as a teacher, a Sunday School teacher, and being a gentleman helped to win the election. One incident I recall in connection therewith was the help he received through having helped a man many years before while teaching at Purchase. A man by the name of W. Johnson had a cow which was being sold to satisfy a debt judgment. My father went to the sale and seeing that the man and his children were going to be deprived of the milk they needed, he bid on the cow and allowed the man to keep it. At that time he never had any idea that such an act would have a lot of influence on an election many years later. However, Mr. Johnson let it be known that this was the same man who performed this unselfish act and it helped a lot.

My father pledged that after a term of eight years as County Clerk he would not seek re-election nor would any of his family. However his son Gus as Deputy Clerk had made so many friends both Republican and Democrat that he was urged by leading Republicans to make the race as the leaders believed he could surely win and help the whole ticket. Their prediction proved correct as he was elected by a greater majority than any other candidate.

Papa became Deputy Clerk under his son in 1928 and served until shortly after the son's death on the 29th of February, 1932. To remove some of the political harshness in selecting a clerk to fill the vacancy created by death, overtures were made by Republican sources close to the Democratic Party to allow my father to continue as Deputy Clerk. As a matter of principle he refused to accept this appointment and thus ended about 45 years of public service — 33 years in the teaching profession and 12 years as County and Deputy Clerk.



Previously, mention was made of his writing the *History of Scott County*. It was not so much the writing that was important but the research inherent in such a project to insure its historic accuracy if at all possible. For about 15 years he collected, read, studied, and copied materials for the book. During some of those years he labored at night under oil lamps as we did not have electricity. Even in the house in Gate City there were no wall outlets for sometime so the lighting there was about as bad as Maces Springs. What material was not written in long-hand was typed on an old Oliver typewriter with one finger on each hand doing the typing. Typing on this machine caused about as much exercise as the modern physical fitness program would produce.

The first marriage of Mr. Addington to Nannie Jackson Nickels was ended by her death at age 33. To this union five children were born -- one girl, the eldest, and four boys. The forebears of Mrs. Addington were John G. Nickels and Lou Hartsock Nickels and the town of Nickelsville received its name from these early inhabitants. The second marriage was to Loula Liberia Dougherty of Snowflake, Virginia. There were no children by this marriage.

Some memorable experiences were:

1. Riding the first train to Bristol upon completion of the South and Western Railroad.

2. Teaching at college level in Shoemaker College.

3. Delivering address at Scott County's Centennial in 1914. He told me one time he was not particularly proud of the introduction as the introducer said he was "a man who had eaten the most apple butter of any man in Scott County" an allusion to the school lunches he had when in school and in his carrying lunches while teaching for 33 years.

3. Meeting Dr. Pusey from Chicago who made a trip down to go over the Wilderness Road. I shall not soon forget that they hired a car and Dr. Pusey gave the driver \$20 for the day



and to me that was an exorbitant sum. It was during this trip that plans were made to erect a marker at the Block House on Holston River. W. D. Morison, Sr. took this stone from in front of our house on the main street of Gate City, carved it to suit the purpose, installed it and attached the marker. Dr. Pusey paid the whole cost of the project.

5. Two friendships of enduring quality — that of Dr. John P. McConnell and W. D. Smith. Just how and when the friendship between each began I do not know. One thing can be said categorically and that is there was no political alliance. Dr. McConnell, president of Radford State College, was a Democrat as was Mr. Smith. All had been in normals together and evidently this association was largely responsible. One time when Mr. Smith was being tried for lack of allegiance to the Democratic party my father was called as a witness. On the witness stand he was asked whether or not Mr. Smith had voted for him, a Republican. He replied by citing a conversation he had with Mr. Smith in which Smith said, "Bob, I must tell you that I did not vote for you." Dr. McConnell would write my father often, reminding him of some incident of interest, and always encouraging him to keep up the work on the history. I would say he received more letters from him than any other person. He also wanted Papa to consider writing biographical sketches of some of the prominent families in the county and even sent a check to get him started. However, the check was returned as Papa did not want at that period of life to start such an undertaking.

My father died at Gate City, December 23, 1936, and was buried in Holston View Cemetery.

NOTES: The late Dr. J. J. Kelly, Jr., for many years superintendent of Wise County Schools, told me, L. F. Addington, president of the Historical Society of Southwest Virginia, a humorous incident which happened at Gladeville College while



he, Dr. Kelly, was a student during R. M. Addington's presidency.

"In those days," said Dr. Kelly, "cows ran at large in and around the town of Wise. One of their favorite places for gathering was in the shade of some trees behind the schoolhouse. Most of them wore bells, and their continual clattering as they fought off flies disturbed the decorum of the classroom. When the noise became unbearable Professor Addington would say, 'One of you boys run out and drive off the cows.' I was always willing and ready to go.

"One day a group of boys hatched up a scheme to fool the professor. So, one afternoon after school was out the boys took a cowbell to the school building and hung it to a bush near the cows' favorite gathering place.

"They tied a cord to the bell's top and one of the group crawled under the floor and extended the other end of the cord up through a knot hole in the floor.

"The cord was fastened to a cork which was placed into the knot hole.

"Next day when study began and Professor Addington was talking, a boy who sat over the cork would reach down, lift the cork up and jerk the cord, thus jangling the cowbell outside.

"Hearing the noise the professor said to me, 'Jack, will you go out and drive the cows away?'

"I went and returned saying, 'No cows out there.'

"The boy at the cork jerked it vigorously again. This time the professor himself went out to investigate. Soon he returned with a big grin on his face. He said, 'Boys who can think up a prank like that ought to go far in books.' He turned the matter aside, not once trying to find out who the boys were that would likely go far in books. But since the school was in such an uproar he suspended classes for the day."



## THOMAS B. FUGATE, EX-CONGRESSMAN

*By Mrs. Thomas Fugate*

The Fugates, who are of French Huguenot extraction, were in Westmoreland County, Virginia, in 1664. A will of Henley Fugate was probated in that year. When they came to Virginia sometime before 1664 and settled in that County, the offspring moved West shortly thereafter. In the early seventeen hundreds they were in Botetourt County. Sometime before 1774 two of them, John and Tom Fugate, settled on Reedy's Creek in Washington County. By 1800 they were in Russell County, Scott County, Virginia, and Claiborne County, Tennessee.

On the maternal side of the family, the Bacon's have a long history. They came to America from England about 1660 and settled along the James River. It was here that Nathaniel Bacon lived when he led the Rebellion against the English Crown. A few years later they were living in Lunenburg and Mecklenburg Counties.

Thomas Alexander Bacon and his wife, Patsey Goode Farrar, migrated from Mecklenburg County to Lee County in 1870. Virginia Bacon was the youngest child, born after her father's death in 1876. Thomas Bacon Fugate was named for his grandfather.

Thomas Bacon Fugate was born April 10, 1899. His place of birth was on a farm twelve miles east of Tazewell, Tennessee, in Claiborne County, on Powell's River, near the Claiborne-Hancock County line. He has always been known as Tom. His parents were William Colbert Fugate and Virginia Alexander Bacon. Virginia Bacon was the second of three wives. Tom was the



eldest of three children, and the other children were girls. There were two boys and two girls by the first marriage and none by the third. Tom's place of birth was the home of his paternal grandparents. Some of the farm land on which the home was built was granted from the State of Tennessee during the administration of John Sevier. The farm is still owned by Tom. William Colbert Fugate, Tom's father, was educated by private tutors and at Cumberland College in Rose Hill, Virginia.

Virginia A. Bacon, Tom's mother, born, reared and educated in Virginia was a school teacher. She was teaching in Tennessee at the time of her marriage.

Tom's father was a farmer, lumberman and banker. Powell's River was a waterway that channeled millions of board feet of the finest saw logs of oak, chestnut and poplar timber to Chattanooga, Tennessee. In his early years from 1883 to 1910, he was engaged almost exclusively in the lumber business.

Tom proudly recalls that the Fugate family was one that lived by the teachings of the Bible. The real power in the family was the paternal grandmother, Rebecca Parkey Fugate, who lived to the age of eighty-nine years. She was a strict disciplinarian. She was married at sixteen to Henley Fugate, Jr. and mothered several children, who were all model citizens. No one questioned her authority.

Tom's father was the youngest child. Out of respect for her as a woman and her success in what she had done, he listened when she spoke. Her requirement was that all must work. From the time one could carry a gallon of water from the spring, use a small hoe in the garden or carry an armful of stove wood she managed to keep him busy. She kept her eye on the farm work. When she saw something that needed to be done, she dispatched someone to do it. She checked later to see if it was done as directed. There was a feeling in the family that only those who worked were welcome to their food. The elder Fugate, being away from home in his business enterprises, left much to be



seen after by the women.

The religious and moral training in the family was a serious requirement. Reading the Bible and having family prayer at night was practiced. The grandmother knelt by her bedside before retiring for her lengthy prayer, no matter how tired she was. The ethical questions that arose in dealing with neighbors and business associates were always discussed and wise decisions were made in the family council.

Tom's father, after most of the lumber was moved out of the area, turned to more intensive farming. He was always trying to improve his livestock and his grain crops. He invested his profits from his lumbering in more farm land. At his death he owned more than two thousand acres of Wallen's Ridge and Powell's River farm lands.

In 1898 Tom's father and a group of business men organized the first bank in Claiborne County, Tennessee. His father was a charter member of the Board and served continuously for thirty-seven years until the time of his death.

In 1920 his father also organized the Peoples Bank of Ewing, Virginia, and served as its President and Chairman of the Board until his death, January 6th, 1935.

His father was also sought regularly to run for public office but he never accepted. He was active, however, in the support of candidates when he thought they would serve honestly and respectfully.

Thomas Bacon Fugate was educated in the public schools of Tennessee. The school term in 1905 was three months, this supplemented by three to five months' subscription school. The buildings were logs with split benches. When he was in the fifth grade, a new frame building was constructed one-half mile closer to his home. The log building was three miles away.

At the beginning of his seventh grade year, Tom was placed in a school six miles from his home where he boarded in a private home through the week, and walked home for the week end. He



attended high school at Tazewell, Tennessee, the county seat of Claiborne County, from 1914 through the spring of 1917 when he graduated. In his junior and senior years of high school, Tom came in contact with a teacher who greatly influenced him in appreciation of the great English and American literary writers. She was Helen Elizabeth Galbreath who had been reared and educated in Knoxville, Tennessee. She attended Knoxville schools and graduated at the University of Tennessee with a major in literature. She taught her first school at Claiborne County High School. Outside of Tom's family she was to influence him more than anyone else. Tom considers that she taught him the true worth of the great writers of prose and poetry and instilled in him a love for all that is fine in the realm of literature. She achieved a close rapport with their works and was able to detail their fine points in her teaching. Her appreciation of the beauty and the intellectual depths of their writings was reflected in her life and her acts. Milton, Shakespeare, Browning, and Tennyson of the English writers; and Robert Burns, the Scottish poet, were as familiar to her as Bryant, Emerson, Longfellow, Whittier and Poe. Two years in her classes for Tom were the opportunity of his lifetime.

In the fall of 1917, Tom entered the University of Tennessee. At the age of eighteen he registered in the World War I draft. In the spring of 1918 he was classified as I-A, and came home from school to await his call. The War closed in the summer of 1918. During the year he did some school work at Lincoln Memorial University. He has been a student all his life and in the early years, he read widely. Biography and history were the two fields in which he was most interested. To widen his knowledge he began early in his life to travel, and has traveled by automobile to every state in the Union except Alaska and Hawaii. He has extended these trips to cover all of the Provinces of Canada except the Northwest Territory and the Yukon. He has spent time and traveled widely in South and Central





*Thomas B. Fugate*



America, Europe, Asia and the South Pacific. People and places where history was and is being made are his primary intellectual interests.

On June 13th, 1918, Thomas Bacon Fugate married Lillian Oretta Rowlett, daughter of Marshall N. and Cordelia Minter Rowlett, of Rose Hill, Virginia, the eldest of three children.

Tom recalls that the date they had set for the wedding came near the end of the week. His father, on the day of the wedding, asked if he were going to be away for a few days. Tom's answer being in the affirmative, his father said: "Don't you think you should cut that small field of wheat before you leave?" Knowing his father, Tom perceived this to be an order. He went to work with one man to put the binder in shape for field work and to get the teams ready to move as soon as the grain was dry. The binder was new and stiff, the grain was heavy; working with all their might they finished by noon. Tom left the driver to care for the teams and dressed, left without eating lunch, drove a Model T. Ford twelve miles, picked up his bride to be, then drove eighteen miles to the home of the minister where some friends were waiting. They were married and boarded a passenger train at 4:00 P.M. for Knoxville, Tennessee. After three days of honeymooning, he was back home on Monday morning ready for work.

Our marriage was blessed with five children, three girls and two boys: Maureen Fugate Shandrick, librarian at Jonesville High School; Harry M. Fugate, business man and farmer of Ewing, Virginia; Katheryn Fugate Testerman, wife of G. E. Testerman, cost accountant at Union Carbide, Oak Ridge, Tennessee; and Francis Bacon Fugate, general manager of Arabian-American Oil Company, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. The second child, Louise Geneva, suffered an accident at the age of eleven which caused her death. We have twelve grandchildren.

Tom Fugate's business life was in one part, a copy of his father's; in another part, was of his own creation. He followed



in his father's footsteps in farming, lumbering and banking, but added two additional interests; community service and active participation in government at both local and national levels.

In 1921 he became a partner in a mercantile business which continued twelve years. He left his home in Tennessee and moved to Virginia where he built a new home. In 1933 and 1934 he was representative for Home Owner's Loan Corporation of the U. S. in the State of Virginia. In 1935, he became President and Chairman of the Board of the Peoples Bank of Ewing, Ewing, Virginia, which position he still holds. Prior, to 1935, he had been Vice-President of this bank. In 1936, he organized a farm supply business in Ewing. In 1937, he organized the Ewing Livestock Company of which he is president. Through the years, he has helped to establish other business enterprises in which he holds executive positions.

Tom has owned and operated farm land since he was twenty years old. In addition to operating the farms which he has personally owned, he supervised the farm land owned by Lincoln Memorial University, consisting of over a thousand acres, for fifteen years; also, for many years he has operated and supervised other farms consisting of several thousand acres. He has administered numerous estates, some running into hundreds of thousands of dollars, served in fiduciary capacities as guardian, trustee or executor. There are many instances where he has served as a representative of families in land divisions and appraisals.

Tom Fugate's entrance into governmental service was purely accidental. The Democratic Party held a nominating convention in Pennington Gap to select candidates for Lee County offices. Because he happened to be there he was nominated for State Representative. Not a word had been said to him before about the nomination. It took him about a month to decide to accept, and he was subsequently elected. His service in this office opened his eyes to the fact that dedicated public servants were



sorely needed, and persuaded him to spend time and effort to achieving good government. He has often said that his service in the county government was most rewarding. Here the work is directly at the base where most human problems begin and find an end. He has also found that there are many opportunities for the public servant to do a real service for his community at this level. He can help make it possible for a tenant farmer to send his children through an elementary school and then through a four year high school; he can see that a bus is provided for school children who have no transportation; he can help build a good road into a community where there has been none before; he can assist a needy senior citizen who has worked all his life for small wages to get a justly merited welfare check; he can get some one eligible for home care to receive nursing and medical attention and see that a retarded child gets the needed specialized assistance.

At the county level members of the county government work with state and federal agencies to get other monies for use in worthwhile projects. Examples are: a water system, a sewer system, a recreational facility and a work project directed at improving the community and the county.

In 1928 Tom was elected a member of the General Assembly of Virginia where he served two years, 1929-1930.

From 1929 to 1958 he served as Vice-President of Cumberland Gap National Historical Park Association for Virginia. During this period, the Association promoted and established the Cumberland Gap National Historical Park. It is interesting to note that the foresight and wisdom exemplified by this group of men in procuring and preserving the Park lands in their undamaged state has been borne out by the national concern which has recently developed over the air and water pollution which has become so distressing across this land.

In 1929 he was appointed by the Governor of Virginia as a member of a Commission to study the mineral resources of Vir-



ginia. In 1936 he was appointed a member of the Lee County Board of Supervisors to fill an unexpired term of two years and in 1938 was elected for a four year term. During his term of office he was instrumental in consolidating Ewing and Rose Hill High Schools into the central high school which he personally named Thomas Walker High School. He also served on the Lee County Board of Public Welfare for ten years.

In 1950, he was elected a member of the Board of Trustees of Lincoln Memorial University. He has served twenty years and was reelected for three additional years on June 6, 1970. During this period he served eight years as Vice-President of this College, eight years as Vice-President of the Board and was a member of the Executive Committee for sixteen years.

In 1944, Tom was elected a delegate to the Democratic National Convention. In 1945, he was elected a member from Lee and Scott Counties to the Constitutional Convention of Virginia.

Tom's interest in national politics came when John Flannagan, who had been in the Congress of the United States for ten years, asked Tom to re-nominate him at the Ninth District Convention. After the Convention, Congressman Flannagan further asked Tom to manage his campaign to which Tom agreed. His performance was so successful that he continued his management for four consecutive and successful campaigns. When in 1948 Congressman Flannagan decided to retire after eighteen years of service, Tom was the choice of the District Convention and was elected to his first term in Congress in November of that year.

On January 3rd, 1949, he was sworn in as a member of the 81st Congress. He recalls that a former Congressman had told him it would be like matriculating at one of the great colleges of America. Tom found that Congress was more than a school. He considers his four years in Washington to be the most exciting and challenging years of his life. This was a whole new experience where the viewpoint must include the National Govern-



mental perspective as well as local Governmental needs and objectives.

Tom often tells this story about his early experiences as a congressman. The President of the United States, Harry Truman, after inviting the new members of the 81st Congress to a room of the Capitol one night to welcome them to Washington, said "Boys, I know what you think and how you feel. You are just like I was when I came here the first time as a freshman Senator. I asked myself; 'How in the hell did I get here?' After I had been here about six months, I said to myself one day, 'How in the hell did some of these other fellows get here?'"

Perhaps the most outstanding contribution of Tom's service in Congress was the legislation he sponsored to streamline the operation of the Panama Canal. The United States bought the Canal Zone from France in 1903 and, at the same time, entered into a treaty with Panama. The Canal was finished and opened for transiting in 1913. Not one year since the operation began had tolls been adequate to defray costs. In 1950, the President of the United States and the Secretary of the Army wrote the Chairman of the Committee on Merchant, Marine and Fisheries to have a study made and recommend to the Congress legislation to separate the different functions into separate categories; that is, the civil and military were to be divorced from the Canal operation. From 1913 the appropriations from the Treasury had been made annually to make up deficits.

Judge Otis Bland, Chairman of the Committee of the Congress, appointed a three man sub-committee of which Tom was a member. One of the members of the sub-committee attended only one meeting. Later the other member withdrew.

Hearings on the Canal were held in Panama and in Washington. The end result was that the civil government of the Canal Zone was required to finance their operation, less taxes, from their treasury. The Caribbean Command was to look to the National Defense for their funds. The business for operating the



Canal was made self-sustaining; that is, tolls were increased sufficiently to pay all costs. The year 1953 was the first year since 1913 that the income was equal to the outgo. It is interesting to note that this operation entailed something like sixty-five million dollars annually, giving one a picture of the size and importance. Tom's efforts in this area were formally recognized by commendations from both the Secretary of the Army and the President of the United States.

Because of the outstanding nature of the service to the Government in respect to the Panama Canal, Tom was sent to Mexico and Nicaragua to confer with officials of those countries about the possibility of a second Canal. The military were interested because the present Canal was not large enough to accommodate some of the large carriers in the Navy.

During the last two years of his service in Congress, he served on the Banking and Currency Committee. Because of his banking experience he was appointed a member of a sub-committee to check loans made by the Export-Import Bank of the United States to the countries of Europe and Asia. While on the Committee he visited eleven countries for the purpose of business conferences with appropriate foreign officials, including President Tito of Yugoslavia. The Export-Import Bank granted credits of three and one half billion dollars in 1951.

In 1950, he was elected a member of the Board of Visitors of Emory and Henry College and served for two years. In 1961, he was appointed by the Secretary of Agriculture, Orville Freeman, for eight consecutive one year terms as a member of a four man State Committee to administer the agriculture laws and regulations of the Agriculture Stabilization and Conservation Service in Virginia. The work required ten to fifteen days a month. In addition to committee work, there were numerous assignments that required him to travel throughout the United States.

Tom Fugate's church affiliation is with the Presbyterian Church. Moving from a Baptist community to a Presbyterian, he



joined that church in 1923. In 1925 he was elected an Elder. He has served on the Session for forty-five years. Beginning in 1922, he has taught the adult men and women's Bible Class. He continues to teach this class and enjoys it. Twice he has been a Commissioner to the General Assembly of the Southern Presbyterian Church.

In 1968, he was chosen the outstanding citizen of the year in Virginia by the Order of the Fraternal Americans. This organization has named seven people to this honored position, two of which were the Honorable Harry F. Byrd, Sr. and the Honorable Colgate W. Darden, Jr. In 1969, he was elected a member of the Board of Visitors of King College for a period of three years.

During the last five years Tom has been a charter member of Board of Directors of the Lee County Recreational Center which has purchased land and built facilities which for the first time provide Lee County citizens and their guests with golfing, swimming, tennis and camping. This project cost a quarter of million dollars. He has been a member of the Lee County Planning Commission since 1961.

Tom holds membership in the following: Martin Station Lodge, 188 A F and A M; Royal Arch Knights Templar, Consistory, Shriners, Eastern Star Cumberland Chapter 170, Order of Fraternal Americans; he has been listed in Who's Who in America, Who's Who in the South and in American Business.

He is the Chairman of the Ninth District Democratic Congressional Committee, member of the State Democratic Central Committee and the State Democratic Steering Committee.

In concluding, I want to summarize my husband's philosophy of life. He sees men and women of all nations and all cultures, of all levels of the economic spectrum as God's people. Whether they live in the Valley of the Mississippi or the Valley of the Nile; whether they live high in the Andes or along the Apennines, they have all a rich history, they and their forebearers. Those struggling against the forces of nature are ever in need



of spiritual food and material assistance. Whether or not they respond to friendliness and kind treatment is not the question; the primary objective is that they develop a positive attitude within the Christian concept to contribute substance to man's eternal good. He is challenged by the opportunities and responsibilities of life.



## GEORGE WASHINGTON LAFAYETTE BICKLEY:

### THE EARLY YEARS

*By James Hagy*

On December 18, 1863, George Washington Lafayette Bickley, a prisoner of the United States government, wrote a letter to President Abraham Lincoln. Bickley was in solitary confinement "in a cell seven by three and a half feet, which contains besides myself, a bed, a stool and water and urinal buckets, so that when every thing is put up compactly I have left me for exercise a space of six feet by eighteen inches, about the size of a common coffin."<sup>1</sup> Bickley's activities as the founder and leader of the Knights of the Golden Circle, one of the most fantastic filibustering organizations of the 1850's and 1860's, had resulted in his arrest and jailing in 1863.<sup>2</sup> His career had come to an end; his coffin-like cell marked the demise of his extraordinary adventures.

The story of the Knights of the Golden Circle has been written. Ollinger Crenshaw, in an article in the *American Historical Review*,<sup>3</sup> and other historians have traced the rise and fall of the Knights of the Golden Circle whose purpose was to unite Mexico and the South, using the acquisition of Texas as their example, into an empire which would be ruled by "General" Bickley. The organization thrived and thousands of followers joined in the North and South. California was even reported to have many supporters of the K.G.C. Unfortunately for his grandiose dreams the Civil War intervened before he could carry out his plans, and federal forces captured him in 1863 during a puzzling attempt to cross into northern territory. Suspected of being a spy for the Confederate States, he spent the rest of the war in prison with-



out trial where he occupied a great deal of his time writing letters to the President, the Secretary of War, and other officials. When the United States government released him at the end of the war, he had only a short time to live.

Upon the death of Bickley in 1867, the *Abingdon Virginian* of October 4, 1867, noted his passing in a lengthy article. This was only natural because Bickley was a native of Southwest Virginia; the editor of the Abingdon paper was very familiar with his schemes. He said that Bickley was "a man to whom more properly belonged the title of adventurer than any other individual in this country. He was a man in whose character there were many flaws, but his best justification would be a truthful statement of his life, and some time when this history of the early stages of the great Rebellion are fully written, the true character of the talented, handsome, vain, and unscrupulous George Washington Bickley may serve to illustrate it."

The true character of Bickley will probably never be ascertained, but some letters which C. Bernard Gibson of Castlewood, Virginia, found hidden away in dusty old books might help to explain this very complex individual. The facts about Bickley's early life have proved very confusing to most authors. For example, one stated that Bickley was born in Boone County, Indiana;<sup>4</sup> another said he was born in 1819.<sup>5</sup> Both were incorrect. Some authors listed his name as George William Lamb Bickley, but this was also erroneous. While the details of his youth "seem impossible to unravel,"<sup>6</sup> perhaps some pattern can be discerned for his life prior to the formation of the Knights of the Golden Circle. By piecing the few facts together from the correspondence of the Bickley family, one can possibly better understand the character of George Washington Lafayette Bickley whose name alone undoubtedly had an effect on his personality.

One of the problems in tracing the early career of Bickley is that he had difficulty in telling the truth. He apparently talked



his way into a number of positions including that of teaching in medical school for which he seems to have had no training.

According to his own statement, he read medicine with Dr. Patterson, of Baltimore, and afterwards attended the two principal medical schools of Philadelphia and New York. Going to Europe, he claimed to have completed his studies in the University of London, his diploma bearing the date, 1842, and such names as that of Elliotson. He then visited Edinburgh and Paris, and profited by the opportunities afforded. Being liberal minded, he attended phrenological lectures under Combe, Simpson, and Cox. After traveling through southern Europe, he returned to New Orleans, where he practiced Medicine for four years. He then returned to Virginia, where he practiced for two or three years.<sup>7</sup>

Some writers have taken these statements at face value; others have accepted some of them and rejected others. Apparently little of the above information was correct.

Even in writing to people who might compare his statements, Bickley did not tell the same story. In his letter to President Lincoln, he stated:

The newspapers claim that I am Genl. Bickley of the Knights of the Golden Circle. To this I reply that I am a nephew of Genl. George Bickley, am no military man, never held a commission of any sort in my life, but have devoted myself to literature and science from my youth.<sup>8</sup>

But to the Secretary of War, he later stated:

I suppose that my misdemeanor consists in my being the President of the K.G.C. organization in America, I admit this, and never denied it; indeed, why should I deny what ought to be known to every American North and South . . .<sup>9</sup>



When Bickley died in 1867 in Baltimore, he was only 44 years of age.<sup>10</sup> His life began at Bickley's Mills, Russell County, Virginia.<sup>11</sup> His parents were George Bickley and Martha A. Bickley; his mother formerly lived in Sussex County, Virginia.<sup>12</sup>

While Bickley was still quite young, his parents moved from Russell County to Petersburg. His father who was born and raised in Russell County did not like Petersburg. In a letter to a cousin at Bickley's Mills, he wrote as so many people did when they left the hill country:

I had no desire to leave your section of country--but reluctantly I done it to gratify a parcel of dissatisfied women, i.e. my wife and sister--but the fact is they are yet dissatisfied--and I believe they would . . . wish they had never had left the sweet mountains.<sup>13</sup>

George Bickley studied medicine under a doctor in the city and his work, according to his statement, progressed well. But he was very poor and there was no work available. In addition to this his health failed him and a lawsuit regarding a brother's estate had not gone well.<sup>14</sup>

If George Bickley ever completed his training in medicine, he practiced the profession for only a short time because on June 10, 1830, he died of cholera after a brief illness. His wife, Martha, at that time planned to return to live with a sister in Sussex County.<sup>15</sup>

The life of Martha Bickley, which no doubt had been a difficult one, became very unstable. She moved from place to place and received little welcome at any of them. Her son, only seven years of age at that time, could be of no aid. In August, Martha lived with a sister in Prince George. To complicate matters she was expecting another child. Lafayette, as her son was then called, was in "reasonable health" although he had been sick for some time.<sup>16</sup> Three months later, Martha was living in



Richmond. By that time her second child, John Wesley Bickley, had been born. The family was in good health "tho poor Lafayette don't look well."<sup>17</sup> Martha mentioned the possibility of returning to Russell County to live with relatives there; however, late in November, 1830, she returned to Sussex.<sup>18</sup>

The main source of information on young Bickley and his mother was Elizabeth Galt, the sister-in-law of Martha Bickley. By 1832, relations between the two women became quite strained resulting from a lawsuit involving Elizabeth and George Bickley. Elizabeth Galt blamed Martha Bickley for the entire difficulty. She stated that she had to sell her house and some other personal goods in order to pay her brother. Elizabeth's testimony thereafter was biased but possibly what she related was basically accurate. According to Mrs. Galt, "if ever one man experienced more from a disobedient wife I expect death would be a friendly welcome to him."<sup>19</sup> The trouble between the two women erupted when Martha went to live with Elizabeth Galt in April, 1832. She brought with her the two children--Lafayette and John Wesley--and remained for two months. Martha then left Prince George and went to

Petersburg and in about 2 weeks the Lord was pleased to take the Dear Little infant home to Heaven where I am in hopes is with its father. I was told by several persons that she neglected the child all together and that it just cried itself to death. She then took Lafayette or rather sent him to Peter Harvils in Sussex and remained herself in Petersburg, bought many fine and costly dresses, had them made by the mantu-makers [?] but let me tell you what deception there is in her after my poor Brothers death. She had a Subscription rais'd in Richmond for the purpose of caring for herself and children to there father relations in the Western part of Virginia. I saw a gentleman with my own eyes hand her fifty dollars for that purpose and I do not expect that was half what she has re-



ceived for that purpose in that way . . . . I heard that she had 2 or 3 men waiting on her and she'd sent Lafayette to her brothers in Southampton so she is as free as a lark now . . . .<sup>20</sup>

The home life of Bickley was not a happy one and the circumstances apparently were not the best for raising a boy of nine years. In the only extant letter by Martha Bickley, written in 1834, in her rough style, she reported that:

george W. L. Bickley was in good health at Whitsintide. he was to see me. I had to put him out this yeare for his victuals and cloathes. next year if wee boath lieve I wish him to goe to school. how I shall pay his board I cannot tel but I will use every exertion in my power for I know it will be all the schooling he will ever get for he must goe to a trade the yeare after. he appears to be a very apte child and I hope will try to improve his tiem [?] for it greaivs me to think he will be ignorant. if I could only send him to school three or four years I shold bee glad but I am not abel.<sup>21</sup>

In 1834, the world seemed a bleak place for Bickley. Although he showed some promise, there was no hint of the future he was to carve for himself in American history.

Between 1834 and 1846 there are no records of Bickley. This period began when he was eleven years of age and he reappeared at the age of twenty-three. If Bickley received any medical training it would have had to be accomplished during these years. If he travelled abroad, he had to do it prior to 1846. A letter written at Bristol, Tennessee, which was found on him at the time of his capture is probably accurate. In it he related that "at an early age, I was thrown on the world pennyless and friendless; yet with great energy I educated myself and rose to eminence in the profession of medicine."<sup>22</sup>

Apparently Bickley left home about the age of twelve and trav-



elled southward. In October, 1846, he was in Milton, Santa Rosa County, Florida. Writing to a relative he asked for forgiveness for some unnamed incident in which he had been involved. He felt "assured that if you knew under what circumstances I deceived you last spring that you would not sensure me. But sir under circumstance, I fear that my time is too limited to attempt to go into the details of the failure. So I will humbly ask you to forbear sensury till I can clear my skirts of this failure."<sup>23</sup> He further stated:

I have wound up my business in Geneva and have just commenced as my stock has not as yet arrived from New Orleans though I am expecting it. I intend to work faithfully in this place this winter and it is now a solemn resolution of mine to go home in the spring through the west. But I am determined never to make another promise.<sup>24</sup>

Later in the same letter he said:

I pray God that time may speed his chariot wheels swifter and bring me to the hospitable home of my kinsmen. Oh, Sir, that word makes my heart flutter for it is strange to me. I have not for 12 years past been blessed with the tender smile of a relative.<sup>25</sup>

This letter places him in western Florida at the time of the Mexican War. Indeed, he discussed the reports of the battles that had been received in Florida. Therefore it is unlikely that he served in that conflict as he sometimes later claimed. It proves also that he left home about the age of eleven or twelve. Judging from the letter he was engaged in some sort of trading business. The town of Geneva which he mentioned was probably the town of Geneva, Alabama, which is not many miles from Milton, Florida; however, there is no record in the 1840 census



of his being in either of the two counties from which Geneva was eventually formed.<sup>26</sup> Since the census was taken of heads of households with the number in the household being merely listed, he could have escaped attention. In addition to this, the city directories of New Orleans for 1838, 1841, 1842, and 1843 have no record of Bickley living there. Furthermore the National Archives has no record of a passport being issued to him; however, they were not then required by law.

In June, 1847, Bickley, true to his word for once, returned home to Prince George, Virginia. Leaving Milton, Florida, in late April, he travelled to New Orleans and then went to Green Castle, Indiana, where he visited some relatives. Bickley reported that:

I never enjoyed myself better in all my life . . . . I like the indiana asbury University very much. I shall either attend there for 2 or 3 years or one in Western Virginia. I found that I can attend at Creen Castle for \$100.00 per year."<sup>27</sup>

This letter seems to refute any claims he later made regarding his education. Had he received medical training in London, why should he attend some obscure school in Indiana?

According to one writer who was probably accurate, Bickley was married on February 3, 1848, to a V. F. Bell of North Carolina. The place of the marriage has not been determined. He fathered a son named Charles Simmons Bickley. His wife supposedly died in June, 1850, and Bickley apparently placed his son with another family.<sup>28</sup> The son lost contact with his father because there are a number of letters by him in the Bickley Papers in the National Archives written to President Grover Cleveland seeking information on his father.<sup>29</sup>

In 1850 Bickley appeared in Russell County. The census of 1850 for that county listed him as the only member of his family. It gave his age as 26, his value as \$400.00, and his occu-



pation as phrenologist. Bickley stayed in Russell County only a short while. Sometime during 1850 or 1851 he moved to Tazewell County, opened an office in the Union Hotel at Jeffersonville (now Tazewell), and began to practice medicine.<sup>30</sup> Bickley stayed in Tazewell long enough to write a history of the county entitled *History of the Settlement and Indian Wars of Tazewell County, Virginia*. In 1851 he moved to Cincinnati where he became a professor in the Eclectic Medical Institute.<sup>31</sup> In one year he progressed from a phrenologist to a physician to professor in a medical college. After that his career has been adequately and accurately reported.

While all the facts are not yet known, and probably would never be, regarding the early life of George Washington Lafayette Bickley, it seems clear that he suffered a very unfortunate youth to the degree that he ran away from home about the age of twelve. Apparently from this time until he appeared in Florida he wandered and worked wherever he could. It is unlikely that he ever travelled abroad or received any formal education. Considering this one must credit him with being extremely intelligent to be able to accomplish what he did in his short life. Although his dreams of empire failed, he was truly an unusual man, perhaps the most unusual to be produced in Southwest Virginia.

<sup>1</sup>G. W. L. Bickley to Lincoln, December 18, 1863, Bickley Papers, National Archives, Washington, D. C.

<sup>2</sup>For the story of his arrest, see: NEW YORK TIMES, July 28, 1863.

<sup>3</sup>Ollinger Crenshaw, "The Knights of the Golden Circle: The Career of George Bickley," AMERICAN HISTORICAL REVIEW XLVII (October, 1941), 23-50. A few of the other sources on Bickley and the K. G. C. are: Mayo Felser, "Secret Political Societies in the North During the Divil War," INDIANA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY XIV (September, 1918), 183-296; C. A. Bridges, "The Knights of the Golden Circle: A Filibustering Fantasy," THE SOUTHWESTERN HISTORICAL QUARTERLY XLIV (January, 1941), 287-302; George F. Milton, ABRAHAM LINCOLN AND THE FIFTH COLUMN (New York: 1942), Chapter IV; Bethania Meradith Smith, "Civil War Subversives," JOURNAL OF ILLINOIS STATE HISTORICAL SOCIETY XLV (1952), 220-240; C. O. Perrine, ANAUTHENTIC EXPOSITION OF THE KNIGHTS OF THE GOLDEN CIRCLE, (Indianapolis: 1861).



<sup>4</sup>Bridges, "The Knights of the Golden Circle," 287.

<sup>5</sup>Crenshaw, "The Knights of the Golden Circle," 24.

<sup>6</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>7</sup>H. W. Feltner, HISTORY OF THE ECLECTIC MEDICAL INSTITUTE (Cincinnati: 1902), 111.

<sup>8</sup>Bickley to Lincoln, December 18, 1863, Bickley Papers.

<sup>9</sup>Bickley to Stanton, January 16, 1865, Bickley Papers.

<sup>10</sup>Cincinnati DAILY GAZETTE, August 16, 1867.

<sup>11</sup>Gloria Jahoda, "The Bickleys of Virginia," VIRGINIA MAGAZINE OF HISTORY AND BIOGRAPHY LXVI (October, 1958), 478. The community was formerly called Castle's Woods; however, from 1832 to 1907 the post office was called Bickley's Mills. Today it is Castlewood.

<sup>12</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>13</sup>George Bickley to John Bickley, June 28, 1828. The family letters quoted in this article belong to C. Bernard Gibson, Castlewood, Virginia.

<sup>14</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>15</sup>Elizabeth Galt to Charles Bickley, June 21, 1830, Bernard Gibson Collection.

<sup>16</sup>Elizabeth Galt to Charles Bickley, August 2, 1830, Bernard Gibson Collection.

<sup>17</sup>Elizabeth Galt to John Bickley, December 25, 1830, Bernard Gibson Collection.

<sup>18</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>19</sup>Elizabeth Galt to John Bickley, June 10, 1832, Bernard Gibson Collection.

<sup>20</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>21</sup>Martha Bickley to John Bickley, June, 1834, Bernard Gibson Collection.

<sup>22</sup>This letter which is in the Bickley Papers in the National Archives is dated December 14, 1862, Bristol, Tennessee. It is addressed to no one in particular. Despite the apparent truthfulness of the first part of the letter, Bickley went on to claim "I have built up practical secession and inaugurated the greatest war of modern times."

<sup>23</sup>G.W.L. Bickley to John Bickley, October 23, 1846, Bernard Gibson Collection.

<sup>24</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>25</sup>*Ibid.*

<sup>26</sup>Geneva County was formed in 1868 from Coffee, Dale, and Henry counties. Coffee County was formed from Dale in 1841. See: W. Brewer, ALABAMA: HER HISTORY, RESOURCES, WAR RECORD AND PUBLIC MEN (Montgomery: 1872), 185, 204, 258, 277.

<sup>27</sup>G.W.L. Bickley to John Bickley, June 23, 1847, Bernard Gibson Collection.



<sup>28</sup>Feltner, HISTORY OF THE ECLECTIC MEDICAL INSTITUTE, 111.

<sup>29</sup>His son, Charles Bickley, was living in New York at the time. Bickley was married a second time in 1853 in Cincinnati to Rachel Dodson. See: Hamilton County, Ohio, Marriage Records, III, 245. The editor of the ABINGDON VIRGINIAN, on October 4, 1867, said "He married and ran through the fortunes of three wealth women."

<sup>30</sup>In his history of Tazewell County, he lists himself as one of the doctors in the town.

<sup>31</sup>Feltner, HISTORY OF THE ECLECTIC MEDICAL INSTITUTE, 111.















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